New oil firms reduce prices by 20¢ per liter

STORY ON PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Peso hits all-time low of ₱52 to $1

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO AND DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE PESO fell to all-time low and local stocks plunged past the 1,450 major support level yesterday as Philippine financial markets reeled from the fallout of Saturday's bombings in Metro Manila.

PESO/ A14

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Cover-up try revealed

Ocampo: Papers readied to show Dichaves owns Velarde account

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

BUSINESSMAN Jaime Dichaves was the fall guy for President Estrada.

Prosecution witness Clarissa Ocampo told the impeachment trial yesterday that then Equitable PCI Bank chair, George L. Go, directed her to draw up documents transferring the President's P500-million trust account to Dichaves, a good friend of Mr. Estrada.

Ocampo, senior vice president of Equitable PCI Bank, said she prepared a second set of bank documents that Dichaves signed last Dec. 13 at the Makati office of Estelito Mendoza, a member of the defense panel in the impeachment trial. *(See related story.)*

The signing occurred five days before Dichaves wrote the Senate to claim ownership of the Jose Velarde account. Ocampo earlier said "Velarde" was none other than the President.

Ocampo also testified that:

- Lawyer Fernando Chua, the President's representative, asked her in the first week of last month "to protect the President."
- The Jose Velarde account was already in existence in 1999.
- The Equitable board of directors instructed her to testify although the impeachment court did not subpoena her.

The prosecution claims that the investment management agreement for a P500-million loan to Wellex Group, a company owned by William Gatchalian, was part of a P1.2-billion savings and current account of the President in Equitable.

But the President declared a net worth of only P35 million in his 1999 statement of assets and liabilities.

The President is on trial on charges of bribery, graft, betrayal of public trust and violation of the Constitution. A conviction on any charge by two-thirds of the 22-member Senate would force him from office.

Ocampo said Go had asked her to prepare a

COVER-UP/ A14

THE DUMBFOUNDED defense lawyer is Estelito Mendoza as Clarissa Ocampo testifies that the investment management agreement of President Estrada's alleged P500-million account to be assigned to Jaime Dichaves was signed in Mendoza's office last Dec. 13. JESS YUSON

Mendoza, Dichaves may have to testify

BY RAUL J. PALABRICA

ANALYSIS

THE DEFENSE lawyers prudently refrained from cross-examining Clarissa Ocampo at the continuation of yesterday's impeachment trial of President Estrada.

Had they done so, they would have been considered to have waived or abandoned their earlier objections to the reception of Ocampo's testimony on the ground that it is immaterial and irrelevant to the graft and corruption charge stated in the Articles of Impeachment.

As things stand at present, her testimony on the Velarde account has been conditionally admitted by the impeachment court.

If the prosecution is unable to prove that the P500 million deposited in the Velarde account is ill-gotten or has no relation whatsoever to the graft and corruption charge, Ocampo's testimony will be stricken off the record.

The defense appears confident the prosecution will have a hard time proving the ill-gotten nature of the deposit or its links to the impeachment charge. That failure would lose its effect had the defense cross-examined Ocampo. The cross-examination may be construed as an implied acceptance of the admissibility of her testimony.

Besides, the manner by which Ocampo testified on direct examination on the circumstances behind the signing of the covering documents of the Velarde account showed that she knew what she was testifying on and had the documents to back up her testimony.

Seasoned trial lawyers know that it is foolhardy to question a witness who seems to be telling the truth and has the supporting papers to substantiate or validate whatever statements he may give on the witness stand.

However, the senator-judges did what the defense thought should not

MENDOZA/ A14

Defense lawyer placed on defensive

BY ROCKY NAZARENO

THE PROFESSIONAL conduct of defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza was put in doubt yesterday after a senior bank official testified that businessman Jaime Dichaves signed bank documents in Mendoza's office on Dec. 13 allegedly to cover up President Estrada's P500-million trust account with Equitable PCI Bank.

But Mendoza said that while he was in his office and meeting with former Equitable PCI Bank chair George L. Go and Dichaves, he denied having had any knowledge that Dichaves had signed any document there.

In an impassioned manifestation, Mendoza said he was "speaking on my own behalf" in explaining the series of events that took place in his office.

Mendoza defended himself, say-

DEFENSE/ A14

Prosecution has burden of proof

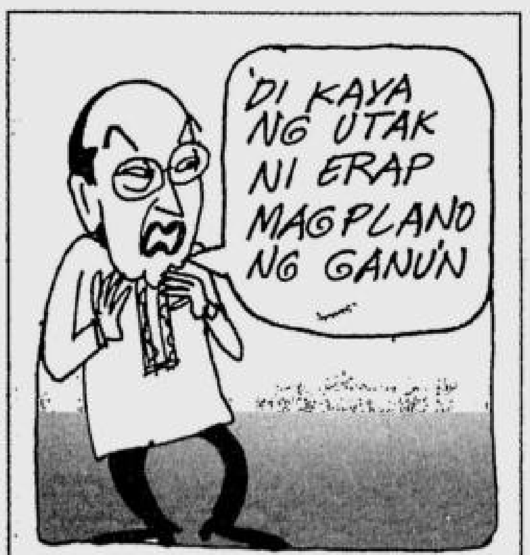
BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

CHIEF Justice Hilario Davide Jr. yesterday upheld the ruling that prosecutors had to prove that the P500 million allegedly stashed by President Estrada in a secret bank account was ill-gotten.

Davide, the presiding officer of the Senate impeachment trial against the President, also rejected a prosecution motion for clarification of his Dec. 22 ruling on the issue.

Davide had ruled then that although Clarissa Ocampo, a senior

PROSECUTION/ A14



'DI KAYA NG UTAK NI ERAP MAGPLANO NG GANU'N

Ernie: Erap lacks the brains to plot bombings

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

PRESIDENT Estrada is not mentally equipped to plot the Saturday bombings that killed 15 people and injured around 90 others.

This left-handed assessment was made yesterday by the President's own spokesperson, outgoing Ambassador to the United States Ernesto "Ernie"

ERNIE/ A13

SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES
JOSE VELARDE

TAKING their turns in front of the Senate building, Estrada Resign groups led by Kompil II and the Estrada Remain proponents, Kasambayan and People's Movement Against Poverty, flaunt their respective causes on the first day of the trial's resumption on Tuesday. PHOTOS BY DENNIS SABANGAN

PNP bomb probers zeroing in on MILF

Vizconde admits alleged witness got her info 'third-hand'

BY JEROME ANING

THE SUPPOSED witness to the Dec. 30 bombings got her information third-hand, but she "is reliable and believable," Lauro Vizconde of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) said yesterday.

Vizconde, the anti-crime group's vice president and spokesperson, made the admission on the same day that an informed government source said the Philippine National Police was zeroing in on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as its prime suspect in the bombing attacks.

According to the government source, PNP Director General Panfilo Lacson called President Estrada yesterday and told him that the MILF could be the group behind the bombings.

Vizconde admitted to reporters that the claim of his source was hearsay. He said the initial source of the supposed information was a military general's wife.

Still, he said he was convinced of the veracity of his source's claim because she "knew in advance" many details concern-

PNP/ A13

DAPAT MAGBABA NA RIN NG PRESYO ANG BIG 3 !

New oil firms cut prices

By Christine C. Gaylican

AS world petroleum prices continue to fall, new oil players reduced pump prices by an average of 20 centavos per liter over the holiday weekend, putting pressure on the Big Three industry leaders to consider cutting their own prices by 40 to 60 centavos per liter next week.

Petron Corp. Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc., which control about 3,000 service stations nationwide, are planning to implement a two-phase reduction, which would coincide with the forthcoming meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries on Jan. 17.

It is believed that the new oil entrants—Seaoil Petroleum Corp., Eastern Petroleum Corp. and Filpride Resources Inc., the holding company of Flying V—have taken the initiative to reduce their pump prices by 20 centavos per liter to try to grab the market share of the industry leaders.

Last Sunday, Seaoil implemented its price adjustment, while Flying V changed its boards on Monday. Eastern's price reduction will take effect today.

Seaoil, which is a wholly Filipino-owned oil distribution and marketing firm, has 40 gas stations in Luzon. Seaoil president Francis Glenn Yu said in an interview that the firm was still considering if oil prices sold to their industrial customers could be also reduced at the same level.

Filpride Resources, which owns 48 Flying V service stations around Manila, Bulacan and Pampanga, sell their diesel gasoline at P13.95 from P14.50; premium unleaded gasoline at P17.62 per liter from P17.92 and its super unleaded at P18.15 per liter from P18.45.

Flying V's chief of staff Macky Lopez said in an interview that if the downturn of petroleum prices in the word market continues, another price cut could be implemented in February.

Eastern Petroleum president Fernando Martinez said that Singapore prices of refined petroleum products such as diesel reached $30 per barrel in December from $37 per barrel in November.

"We have to be careful not to overdo our price reduction before the Opec meeting," said Pilipinas Shell vice president Reynaldo Gamboa.

Petron Corp. president Jose A. Syjuco Jr. said in a separate interview that this was the most appropriate strategy at this time since it is hard to predict how the market will react to an Opec decision to either drastically increase or decrease petroleum prices.

Gamboa noted that other than the softening of Dubai crude prices, they also need to consider other factors, such as: the depreciation of the peso; the request of petroleum dealers to increase their margins by 40 centavos per liter; the cost implication of adhering to the Clean Air Act; the increase in their operating costs due to high interest rates; the under-recoveries acquired in the past three months; and the lifting of the tariff suspension slapped on imported petroleum products by February.

Syjuco said that the company's price rollback was higher than what the new players have posted. He said Petron was planning to implement the fuel price adjustment next week, but it could adjust prices immediately if other tough competitors such as Pilipinas Shell and Caltex decide to change its price boards tomorrow morning.

Against expectations of higher crude prices related to higher winter demand for oil in December, world crude prices dropped to a low of $19.455 per barrel on Dec. 20 from a high of $30.32 per barrel in November.

A tossup for Diokno, Angara

By Donna S. Cueto

WHO will be the next executive secretary?

It's now a tossup between Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno and Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara, according to Acting Press Secretary Michael Toledo.

Other sources said, however, that it is definitely Diokno, after Angara had refused to accept the President's offer of the challenging post vacated by Ronaldo Zamora.

President Estrada earlier said that the Cabinet member he had chosen to replace Zamora was just winding up his affairs at his present post in preparation for taking over as executive secretary.

The sources said that since Angara did not want to give up the agriculture portfolio, Mr. Estrada had chosen Diokno.

The sources said Angara had said he would only consider taking on the job if he would be allowed to retain his agriculture post in a concurrent capacity.

But it appeared there were really no ready takers for the post.

Even Diokno initially did not want it.

A source said that Diokno would rather have stayed on at the budget department.

The President is likely to announce the new members of the Cabinet this week, according to his personal spokesperson Ernesto Maceda.

Zamora and Press Secretary Ricardo Puno Jr. submitted their resignations and went on terminal leave last week to prepare their run in next May's polls.

Zamora is interested in a congressional seat in San Juan, the President's hometown, while Puno is eyeing the Senate.

Deputy Senior Executive Secretary Ramon Cardenas is now the acting executive secretary, while Press Undersecretary Mike Toledo is now the acting press secretary.

With some new Cabinet members, the President would be working more efficiently this year, after the impeachment trial, Maceda said.

He said the Cabinet would have a "bigger say in policy matters" this year.

Where are the candidates?

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE IMPEACHMENT trial, the recent bombings and the lingering effects of the long holiday may have served to make politicians overlook the fact that the election season began yesterday.

The first day for the filing of certificates of candidacies for the May 14, elections passed yesterday with nary a soul going to the Commission on Elections main office in Intramuros to declare a bid to contest an office.

Under the law, those planning to run for senator must file their certificates with the Comelec law department, while candidates for congressmen in the National Capital Region must file theirs with the Comelec NCR office, also in Intramuros.

But as the clock struck five and with the Comelec Law Department and NCR office declaring no filers as of closing time on the first day, a 31-year-old man from Tayabas, Quezon, came to request for a certificate of candidacy form.

Gloria says husband's brother sold US buildings

By Christine Avendaño

VICE President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo yesterday said that her brother-in-law had already sold two pieces of real state property in San Francisco in the United States, which her detractors claimed were really owned by her and her husband.

Macapagal made the disclosure at the television show of movie actress Kris Aquino, where she was asked about the US properties of her brother-in-law Ignacio Arroyo, which were valued at P120 million when they were purchased in 1992.

"He already sold it. Its academic," Macapagal said of the property, which consisted of a 35-unit apartment building at 737 Bush St. and a commercial condominium at 1776 Sacramento corner Van Ness Avenue sitting on a 1,000-square meter lot.

Arroyo himself confirmed that he sold the Van Ness condominium on Sept. 11, 1998 and the Bush property on June 14, 1999.

Arroyo apparently did not make much money from selling his seven-year-old investments.

The Van Ness property, consisting of two units acquired by Arroyo acquired for $2.55 million, was sold for $3.1 million. The property was sold to William and Rosemarie Garlock of the Garlock Family Trust.

The Bush property was acquired by the Prana Capital, a US-based corporation, for $2.4 million. It was originally bought for $2.05 million.

Asked by the Inquirer why he decided to sell the property, Arroyo said he was angered over the way they were being used against her sister-in-law.

"I'm not used to this kind of attention," Arroyo also said of the controversy, which hounded him, after some quarters alleged that Macapagal and her husband were the true owners of the property.

Arroyo has always contended that he bought the property from the inheritance he got from his late mother, Lourdes Arroyo, who belonged to the landed Tuasons.

In 1998, Macapagal, who was at the time a senator, was charged with graft before the Office of the Ombudsman by lawyer Ricardo Valmonte.

Valmonte alleged that Macapagal did not declare the US property acquisitions in her statement of assets and liabilities in 1996 and 1997.

Macapagal was cleared by the Ombudsman in June 1998.

Macapagal's alleged ownership of this property came up again in November last year when it was reported that her brother in law's income tax returns showed he had not the means to pay for the property.

The Vice President reiterated yesterday the revival of the "old charge" was part of the black propaganda being waged against her by her detractors.

She also said that according to her brother-in-law, it was against the law to release income tax returns.

"Only the President can authorize anybody to publish income tax returns," she said.

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Pols jockey for Iglesia blessing

By P. C.Tubeza and D. S. Cueto

ON WHOM will his favor rest?

Iglesia ni Cristo executive minister Eraño G. Manalo yesterday celebrated his 76th birthday quietly as always. But with politicians aspiring for office making sure that the influential church leader and his flock would remember them come Election Day, the INC leader's birthday celebrations were far from simple.

Even President Estrada expressed his interest in personally greeting the INC leader for whom the President has, in on several instances, professed to have the greatest respect.

Politicians, ranging from the lowliest barangay chair to exalted senators, set up banners with birthday greetings for Manalo in front of the INC Central Temple on Commonwealth Avenue in Diliman, Quezon City.

The INC vote is avidly courted by aspiring candidates because INC members usually vote as a block for candidates that the church leadership chooses to support.

Outgoing Ambassador to the United States Ernesto Maceda, the President's personal spokesperson for the ongoing impeachment trial, said greeting Manalo on his birthday was "high on the priority of all political leaders."

"Maybe that is one of the reasons why the President did not have any appointments today," Maceda said.

INC spokesperson Bienvenido Santiago said that there was no prepared program for the celebration of Manalo's birthday, as this was only observed through prayers by church members.

The biggest of the streamers came from Quezon City Mayor Ismael Mathay and his sons, Chuck and Bu. The Mathays had two banners put up on the New Era overpass facing the northbound and southbound lanes of Commonwealth Avenue for motorists to see.

Sen. Nikki Coseteng and her son Julian, a Quezon City councilor, had one streamer.

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NEWSBRIEFS

DOH faces P5-M suit

THE DEPARTMENT of Health is facing a P5 million lawsuit from a pharmaceutical firm suspended for two years from supplying medicines to the government for allegedly violating 85 regulations of the Bureau and Food and Drug.

Philippine Pharmawealth Inc. sued the DOH for P5 million in compensation for the damage on its reputation.

The company is also demanding an additional P1 million for exemplary damages and another P1 million for attorney's fees. A hearing was set for today at Branch 161 of the Pasig Regional Trial Court.

The BFAD said Pharmawealth made 85 different violations in delivering various medicines to the DOH. The BFAD reported the violations after laboratory analysis of products delivered to the DOH.

DAR board voids land deal

THE DEPARTMENT of Agrarian Reform Adjudication Board (DARAB) has rejected for lack of merit an appeal by the heirs of a sugarcane farm owner who tried to enter into a lease contract with a businessman to save their 43.3-hectare in Cebu from being covered by the agrarian reform program.

In its eight-page decision, the seven-man DARAB, chaired by Agrarian Secretary Horacio Morales, ruled that the lease contract entered into between the late Albino de la Cruz Jr. and Ponciano Demiar on March 28, 1994, was null and void for being contrary to law.

This is because the land had previously been placed under the coverage of comprehensive agrarian reform program on June 21, 1990.

Power bills lack safeguards

THE CURRENT versions of the Omnibus Power Act now pending before the bicameral conference committee do not guarantee that the Filipino consumers will have adequate, reliable and efficient supply of electricity at reasonable rates.

"The bills lack sufficient safeguards to assure the kind of genuine competition that will bring down electric rates," said Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, chair of the Senate ways and means committee, in a press statement.

Enrile said consumer protection is his condition for supporting the power measure.

"We must not forget the devastating lessons of the power crisis in 1992. As we are seeing in California today, the private sector cannot be counted upon solely to build enough power plants to meet demand and maintain reasonable reserve capacity. This resulted in the doubling of electric rates in most of California, and even triple in San Diego," Enrile said.

RP visual arts lecture

ALL over the Philippine archipelago, from the Cordilleras to the Sulu Seas can be found cultural minorities whose lifestyles are distinct and uniquely their own from an early time, even antedating the coming of Western colonizers. These pockets of culture, minimally influenced by an outside world and evolving in close communion with nature and their environment persist up to the present time.

Art historian David Baradas, a longtime authority on Philippine ethnic art, explores this little-known world of the indigenous Filipino. His talk, scheduled at 10 a.m., on Jan. 13, at the Tambunting-Villongco Hall, 4th floor Museum of the Filipino People (former Finance Bldg.), is jointly sponsored by the National Museum, Museum Foundation of the Philippines and National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Registration starts at 9 a.m. Admission fees include tour of the Museum Exhibits, hand-outs and refreshments. Students will be given discounts.

For further information, call Tata Poblador at 8190046 or Cynthia Valdes at 842 0329.

Dante Tan seeks travel permit

BY DONA PAZZIBUGAN

BUSINESSMAN Dante Tan has asked a Pasig court to allow him to travel abroad despite his having been charged in connection with last year's BW Resources stock manipulation scandal.

Tan's lawyer, Agnes Maranan, did not tell the court where Tan would go or for how long he would be away beyond saying that her client had to attend "usual business meetings abroad."

But she mentioned that Tan was scheduled to take a business trip today to Hong Kong where he planned to stay for two to three days and another trip to Jakarta on Jan. 17.

The Department of Justice last month charged Tan, president of the gaming firm BW Resources Corp. and a known close friend of President Estrada, with violation of the Revised Securities Act in connection with the October 1999 BW stock fraud.

He is scheduled to be arraigned on Jan. 16 before the Pasig regional trial court Branch 153.

DOJ assistant chief state prosecutor Nilo Mariano said prosecutors would likely oppose Tan's request since the charge sheet against President Estrada in his impeachment trial included his alleged attempt to influence the investigation into the BW scandal.

After a months-long probe, the DOJ charged Tan and two other BW officials, Jimmy Juan and Eduardo "Moonie" Lim Jr., with stock manipulation even as it cleared 11 brokers, two investment houses and 37 individuals.

Government prosecutors said Tan, Juan and Lim conspired to cause artificial BW stock sales which resulted in the skyrocketing of the prices of BW shares by more than 5,000 percent from March to October, 1999.

Share prices however plummeted on the day BW officials announced that Macau casino king Stanley Ho had been elected chair of the board of BW with only a minority stake.

Some sectors had said the filing of charges against Tan was aimed at preempting the testimony of former Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Perfecto Yasay in the impeachment trial.

Yasay had earlier said that the President ordered him to clear Tan from any wrongdoing even though the SEC had yet to wrap up its probe of the BW scandal.

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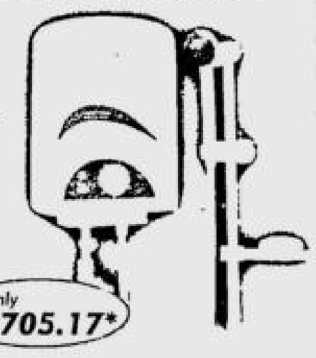

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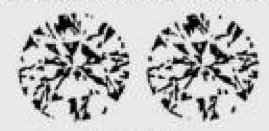

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•ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING FOR MGRS. AND SUPERVISORS January 13, 2001	Saturday	1:00PM–5:00PM
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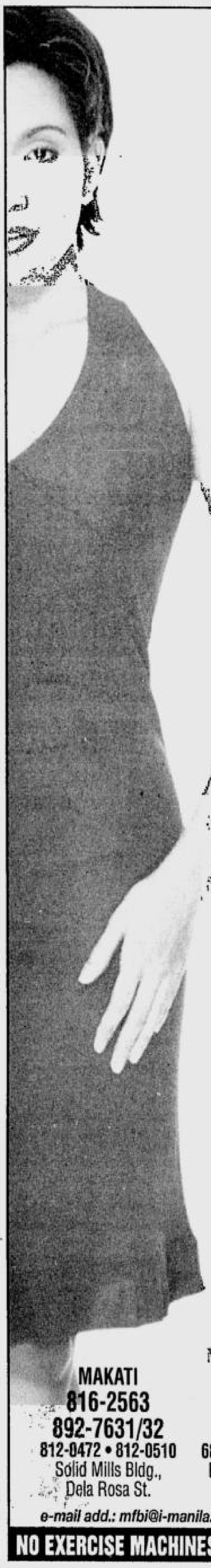

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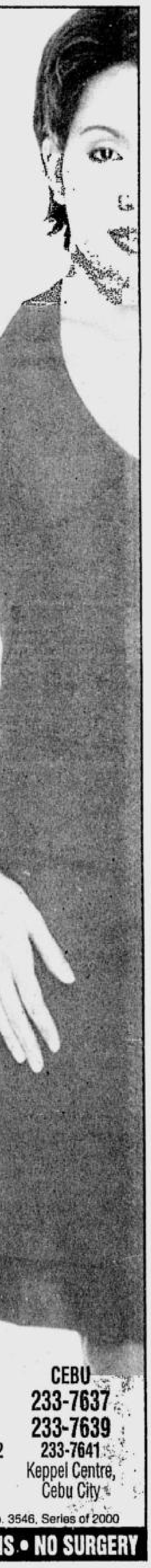

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OPINION

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EUGENIA D. APOSTOL
Founding Chairman

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EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT Estrada's acquittal by the Senate in his impeachment trial would still leave in doubt his ability to govern effectively. Even if Mr. Estrada is found not guilty of any impeachable offense, "there's no clear picture on how he can effectively govern and that's not an easy scenario to deal with."

There's nothing new about that prognosis. Everyone opposed to the continued stay in office of Mr. Estrada has cited this as one of the principal reasons for him to either resign or be stripped of his position through impeachment or other means. Jaime Cardinal Sin, for instance, said that Mr. Estrada no longer had the "moral ascendancy" to govern almost as soon as he heard Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson's tale of multimillion-peso payoffs from *jueteng* and multimillion-peso kickbacks from excise taxes on Virginia tobacco. What made this assessment news was that it was made by Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla.

"Even if I am convinced of his innocence, the question remains whether he can govern," Medalla was quoted as saying late last week by Reuters news agency. "Governance is to a large extent also perception and appearance."

And what is the perception of the people, particularly the sectors whose decisions will largely determine whether the economy will recover and grow? Even if the allegation that the President committed graft and corruption is not true, Medalla said, there are enough people who believe it is true. "In particular, the business community believes it is true," he said, "the international business community believes it is true."

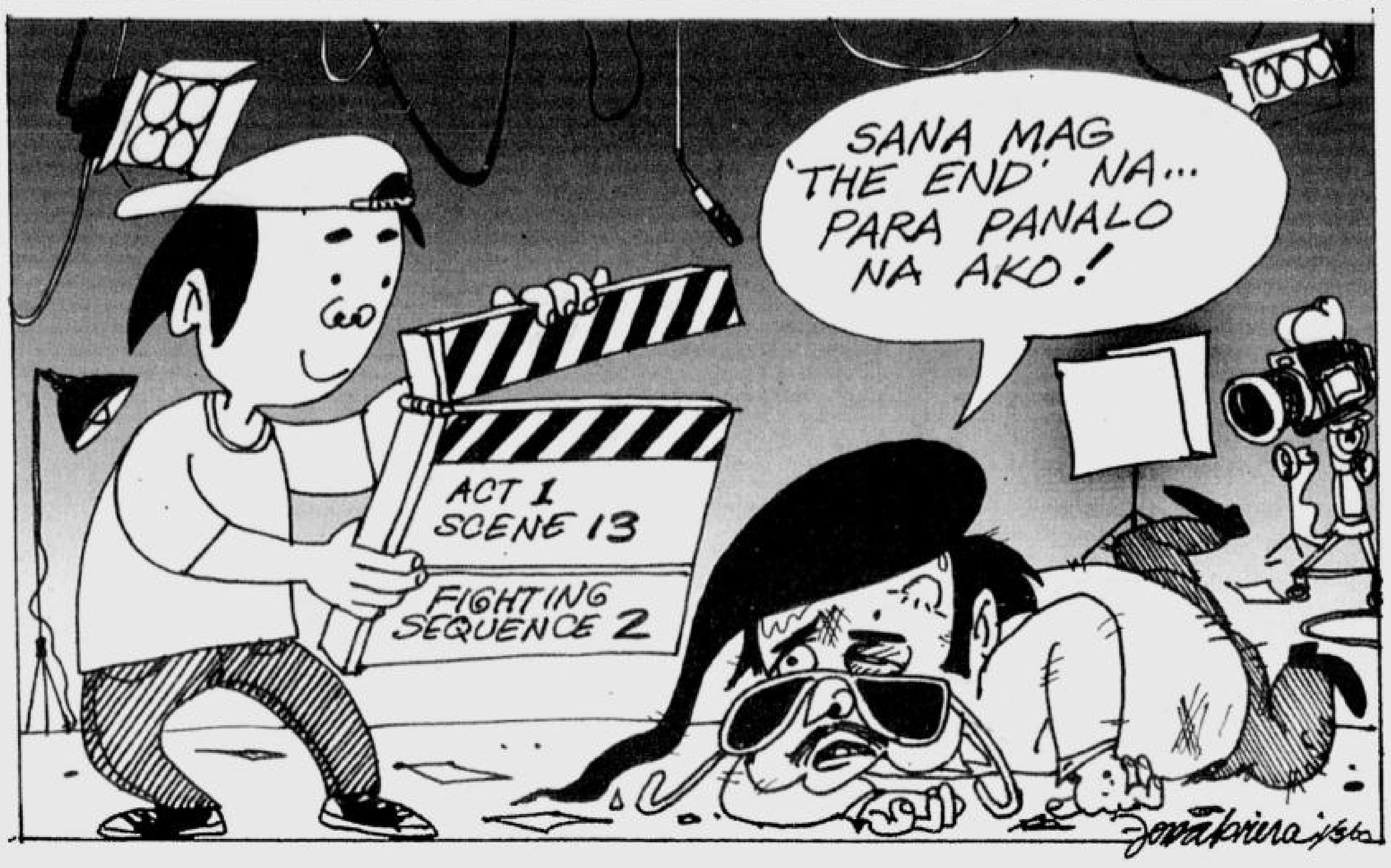
This widespread perception of graft in government, coupled with charges of cronyism and mismanagement, has proven costly for an economy that has been struggling to recover from the 1997 Asian financial crisis. While the administration boasts about the 4.5-percent GNP growth in the first three quarters of last year—already one of the lowest in the region—there is no reason to think even that modest rate can be sustained this year. Investment during the first 11 months of last year hit a 12-year low of P38.7 billion, down by 64 percent from the previous year's P106 billion, according to the Board of Investments. The level of investment is not expected to improve this year. And in a more direct expression of lack of confidence, almost all the major business groups have demanded Mr. Estrada's resignation or ouster.

But even as businessmen and investors act on their beliefs, the country economic managers continue to hang on to the hope that somehow things would change. Only Manuel Roxas III seems to have found Mr. Estrada's sins of omission and commission serious enough, revolting enough and reason enough to make him leave his post as trade secretary. In the face of mounting evidence of the President's wrongdoing, Medalla and several other officials, who were once held in high esteem by the public, have opted to suspend their own judgment on the case against the President. Faced with the testimony of Equitable PCI Bank senior vice president Clarissa Ocampo linking Mr. Estrada to a secret account under the name of Jose Velarde with at least P500 million in deposits, Medalla said he and other Cabinet members were waiting for the President's explanation. "That's what we want to find out: where did it come from?" he said.

It's the same question that is on everyone's mind. And the people have been asking for an explanation after reports came out that the President or his mistresses owned several luxurious mansions. But all they got was Mr. Estrada's repeated assurance that he would answer all the charges against him before the proper forum. If the President has chosen not to come clean before the people to whom he is accountable, what makes Medalla think that Mr. Estrada would feel any obligation to explain to government officials who owe him their positions?

If Medalla ever gets the gumption to ask for an explanation, Mr. Estrada would probably tell him that he won all that money from mahjong or the Irish sweepstakes or that he had found the treasure of Yamashita, like one of his predecessors, Ferdinand Marcos. And going by the way Medalla and other so-called "decent elements" in the Cabinet have rationalized their decision to hang on to their posts, they would probably swallow that tale without question. When someone wants badly to keep his job with all its pomp, perks and privileges, it is easy to accept any excuse for the most obvious wrongdoing.

If Mr. Estrada's explanation proves unacceptable, every member of the Cabinet can always say with Medalla that the country would be "better off" if the President were to be removed by the Senate than "by the mass abandonment of the Cabinet." It's a copout no doubt. And it is the final refuge of a Cabinet member who has learned to love his post too much to let go.


SANA MAG 'THE END' NA... PARA PANALO NA AKO!
ACT 1
SCENE 13
FIGHTING SEQUENCE 2

How can the Mindanao problem be solved?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I WAS one of the panelists of ANC Channel 21's one-and-a-half hour year-ender and we discussed the effects, causes and significance of the various outstanding events in the country the past year: natural and man-made calamities, crime and corruption, the Muslim rebellion and the Abu Sayyaf kidnappings, down to the impeachment trial and the recent bombings. I will amplify on one subject because we were not able to discuss it fully due to lack of time: the Muslim problem.

We were asked what were the cause or causes of the Muslim problem. My answer was poverty, more than the religious problem or the independence movement. Yet ironically, Mindanao is a rich land with potentials for becoming even richer. In agriculture alone, it has the potential of being able to produce more than either Luzon or the Visayas.

But why is there poverty in Mindanao? I would like to qualify that. Mindanao is populated by Christians, Muslims and pagan hill tribes. Most of the Christian areas, which are scattered in the biggest part of Mindanao, are well-off. It is the Muslim enclaves and hill country that are poverty stricken. These minorities see their Christian neighbors prospering while they themselves remain mired in poverty. They feel like second-class citizens in the land of their birth while Christians who migrated from Luzon and the Visayas reap the fruit of that land.

Can you blame them for their resentment against the Christians? Can you blame them for wanting to have a separate and independent country? Can you blame them for feeling that the Christian immigrants are merely exploiting them?

The answer is not in military subjugation. The army cannot stay in Mindanao forever. It has to leave sometime. When it does, the rebel movement will flare up again, as it has done periodically through the centuries going back to the American colonial occupation. Then, as it is now, the cause was poverty.

Why are the Muslims being left behind in prosperity by their Christian brothers? Because of lack of education and because of the old culture of dependence on the royal households. The sultans and datus told them what to do and were responsible for their livelihood. Unknown to them, it was the members of royalty who were the first to exploit them. Royalty exploiting their subjects, here and elsewhere, are as old as civilization. But in Mindanao, there are the Christian interlopers fattening themselves on Muslim land to blame as scapegoats.

The answer to the Muslim problem is to eradicate poverty in Mindanao, especially among the Muslims and the hill tribes. If they become as prosperous as their Christian neighbors, the envy and resentment would go away—even if they have different religions. The clamor for independence would cease to be popular. Many Muslims join the secession movement because having no jobs, there is nothing else for them to do. And with a prosperous Mindanao, it would be foolish to separate from it.

But eradicating poverty is easier said than done. Setting up factories and constructing irrigation canals to make Mindanao bloom and building roads and bridges require a lot of money. How do you develop Mindanao and eradicate poverty with an empty treasury?

Tourism would seem to be the answer. Private enterprise would provide the capital for tourism facilities; government would be limited to constructing the transportation facilities. We are being left behind by our Asian neighbors in cashing in on tourism. Thailand and Indonesia, for example, get the biggest portion of their foreign exchange income from tourism. With tourism in Mindanao as robust as that in Thailand and Indonesia, jobs would be aplenty for the Muslims as it is their areas that would be attractive to tourists.

I have gone on a few boat rides from the Mindanao mainland to Sulu aboard navy ships when I was covering the reelection campaign of President Macapagal. The sea going to Sulu is dotted with tiny islands that Westerners dream about. White sand beaches, coconut palms, surf and sun, coral banks teeming with marine life; any island can be a tourist's own private hideaway where he can be a Robinson Crusoe for a couple of days and nights. The beach described in the novel and movie "The Beach" could be any one of these islets.

But unfortunately, boosting tourism consists not merely of opening Philippine skies to all airlines. These airlines don't bring in tourists but merely poach on passengers going out of the Philippines. Tourists don't fly into a country merely because there are many airlines going there. That country must have attractions and facilities for tourists to want to go there. The Department of Tourism is sorely lacking in selling the Philippines to the tourists.

Also unfortunately, Mindanao is widely known as the kidnapping and bandit capital of the world. A tourist would think a hundred times before going there.

But as stated earlier, if these bandits and kidnappers have other means of livelihood, they would leave the outlaw life. But now we come to the chicken-or-the-egg problem. And anyway, it would take some time before foreigners trust Muslims enough to dare to go to Mindanao.

But there's the potential and there's the problem. It is up to the Muslim and Christian leaders to solve the problem and exploit the potential.

* * *

TODAY'S Erap joke:

Erap's definition of democracy:

Government off the people, poor the people and buy the people.

It's in our hands

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'VE noticed two pessimistic strands of thoughts among the letters I've gotten lately. This was before the bombings, I do not know if the bombings have dispelled or deepened them. But they are worth looking into in themselves.

The first one says Erap will be acquitted even if the prosecution proves him guilty. The way the senators have acted so far, the letter-writers say, that seems to be a cinch. Most of them will vote according to politics and not according to evidence. They will only use Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.'s credibility to deodorize their verdict.

The second one says even if Erap is changed, things are not likely to change. Look at Cory Aquino and look at Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the letter-writers say, they are the ghosts of Christmas Past and Christmas Future. Putting Aquino after Marcos did not make things better for the poor; putting Macapagal after Erap won't make things better for the poor.

Well, first, Erap's inevitable acquittal. I'm not so sure at all it's inevitable. True, many of the senators will probably vote according to politics. But that, quite paradoxically, is also the best assurance they will vote according to evidence. If there is sufficient public pressure to make sure the senator-judges heed the trial documents rather than their political commitments, the substance of the proceedings rather than their procedural substantiation, common sense rather than uncommon nonsense, they most assuredly could be persuaded to vote according to reason. Most of the senators are running this May and cannot afford the public perception that they screwed the truth to get ahead. Where conscience coincides with political future, they will discover conscience.

While at this, I am not discounting the possibility of grace or enlightenment striking the senators on their way to their personal Damascus. Though I have given up on that thought with respect to Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. You would think that when you reach that age where you are engulfed by a sense of mortality, you'd make absolutely sure you have the correct line of defense when you meet your Maker. Not he apparently.

But the bombings may drive hitherto like-minded senators to see the light. Grace comes from many sources: The blinding light of explosions, accompanied by the screams of the wounded, has been known to make the blind see and the deaf hear. Some friends of mine who have remained in Erap's administration have always told me they have a cutoff point: While they can abide theft, they cannot abide murder. Now is the time to live up to those words.

But more than this, so what if eight senators decide to play devil's advocate in the absolute sense of the term and acquit Erap? That is not the end of the road. The pessimism overlooks what's happened over the last three months, which is the tremendous education the public has gotten, which is the pushing back of apathy and cynicism that have run riot over the past 10 years, which is the rekindling of the fires of moral outrage and activism throughout the land. Nowhere has the slogan "Never again!" sounded more eloquent—and believable—than today.

I disagree with those who summed up the year in the New Year's Eve wrap-ups as being merely one long bleak and tragic 12 months. Of course it was. But it was a year too when the country saw for the first time the true depths of corruption in high places and tried to do the seemingly impossible, which was to impeach a president for it. A corruption that should mean much more than thievery now, that should mean as well a murderous need to cling to power. Before the year was out, Erap said he had been badly beat up, but like the characters in his movies, he would get up and overcome his foes in the end. Right movie, wrong role. That role is no longer Erap's, it is the Filipino people's. We're the ones who have been so badly beat up over the years, most of all by the biggest goon that was his administration, but who will get up and win in the end.

The real tragedy is not that Erap will not be changed, it is that nothing will change after he is. Nowhere have I felt that things can really change than today.

Which brings me to the second point, the idea that nothing possibly can change, which makes the task of removing Erap a useless one.

That is not up to heaven, that is up to us. It is not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings. The reason nothing changes, the reason our leaders rape and pillage this country one after another, is that no one has gotten punished for it. Not Marcos, not his cronies, not the leaders and their cronies who came after him. The impeachment of Erap precisely says it is time we did something about the crooks in public office: it is time we kicked them out, it is time we put them behind bars like South Korea. It sets a monumental precedent for enforcing decency in public office, it sets tremendous standards by which to measure the conduct of public officials. At the very least, it sends a powerful warning to future leaders. You break the law like Erap, you'll end up like Erap.

Indeed, what applies to the future applies to the past. The same rod that will measure the conduct of public officials henceforth will measure the conduct of public officials thereto. The judgment that will be rendered on Erap will resonate on the past, allowing us to reexamine and reinterpret our history. It will throw a fierce light on the figures of the past, allowing us to reexamine and reinterpret them. Let not Aquino or Fidel Ramos feel so smug and secure. We may not be able to prosecute and jail the wrongdoers before Erap, but we sure as hell will never look at them the same way again.

But more than this, nothing changes because we think nothing possibly could. That is the most self-fulfilling prophecy of all. It is the attitude of cynicism and surrender that makes nothing change. It is the belief that you cannot put the fear of God and the citizens in any Filipino leader that makes the looting and murder persist. It is the instinct to be awed by adversity, finding comfort in despair, discovering wisdom in apathy, embracing the silence again like a reconciled lover, that makes iniquity come back again and again with the fury of typhoons.

The Wizard of Oz did not give anything to the lion, the tin man and the straw man that they didn't already have. That is just another way of saying the future has always been in our hands. We've just been using those hands to jerk off.

* * *

Conrad de Quiros' correct e-mail address is dequiros@vasia.com.ph

Failures of governance

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE MARKET reeled yesterday from the shock waves of the Dec. 30 bombings in Metro Manila. The peso exchange rate to the dollar dipped to 51, its lowest fall since Oct. 30. The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index tumbled to 1,448 points, down 46.01 points from 1,494.50 points on Friday. These drops heralded the stronger pressures on the peso and the share market as the New Year began.

The bombings scared the public from going to shopping malls. The scare is expected to hit retail trade harder, after it had suffered a slump during the Christmas holidays due to the economic slowdown. As far as the economic outlook for 2001 is concerned, nothing could have been more aggravating than the bombing. The bombing followed bleak forecasts on economic growth by the National Economic and Development Authority and the Makati Business Club.

In its 2000 year-end report, the Neda scaled down the government's economic growth target for 2001. It revised the gross domestic product to 3.0 percent to 3.5 percent, from 4 percent to 5 percent. Neda Director General Felipe Medalla's projection of "moderate growth" is based on an optimistic scenario—the expectation that the crisis of confidence of President Estrada would be resolved in the first quarter of 2001. This expectation is like praying for a miracle to happen.

The MBC's year-end outlook is even bleaker. It projected a GDP growth rate of 3.7 percent for 2000 and a 2.7 percent rate for 2001—lower than the Neda's projection. The MBC forecast a negative 2.7 percent growth for agriculture—the star performer during the past two years in its contribution to the GDP—for 2001, down from 3 percent in 2000. It predicts a.7 percent inflation rate in 2001, up from 4.3 percent last year, and an unemployment rate of 11.7 percent in 2001, up from 11.1 percent last year.

Already at the beginning of the New Year, the country is rocked by a new round of political instability, this time triggered by the outbreak of violence which killed 15 people and wounded scores of others. The bombings accentuate perceptions overseas of political instability—the main cause of the drying up of the investment flow during the past two years.

Whoever is responsible for the bombings, which are condemnable, the explosions represent a breakdown in peace and order, in particular, and in governance, in general. Maintenance of peace and order as well as protection of the lives of citizens from violence is the primary responsibility of government. The bombings represent a failure of government in discharging this responsibility. In fact, the violence is only one of two major failures of government so starkly pronounced at the beginning of the year. The other is the garbage crisis.

If it had not been for the impeachment trial of the President, the garbage mountains that have piled up on the streets of Metro Manila would have been the most appalling symbol of the breakdown of essential municipal services for which the government is responsible. The garbage crisis could not now remain in the shadow of the impeachment trial. Although garbage disposal is primarily the responsibility of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, it is in fact a national government responsibility. Metro Manila is the national capital, and the showcase of the nation. Metro Manila is probably among the filthiest cities on this planet. President Estrada has implicitly accepted garbage disposal as also a responsibility of the national government, so he designated Flagship Projects Secretary Roberto Aventajado as the garbage "czar" responsible for locating a new dump after the closure of the San Mateo landfill.

While Aventajado was trying to solve the garbage crisis, he was at the same time the presidential negotiator on the release of the hostages held by the Abu Sayyaf. He was doing two difficult things all at the same time. So, after the hostages were released, Aventajado found the garbage problem more complex than he thought. He reckoned shipping the garbage to an island off Antique would solve the Metro Manila crisis. The people of Antique were naturally outraged over their province being the dumping ground for Metro Manila's rubbish, so they got a court injunction to stop the conversion of Semirara Island off Antique into a dump.

The bombings and the garbage crisis are stark proofs of a government gripped by paralysis arising from the crisis of corruption rocking the Estrada administration. The administration has concentrated its efforts to get Estrada off the hook in the impeachment trial, casting the administration adrift.

The Dec. 30 bombings represent the worst massacre of civilians by unknown terrorists since the 1972 Plaza Miranda bombing, which nearly wiped out and maimed the political leadership of the Liberal Party. In that bombing, there were many suspects for being responsible—among them the Marcos administration itself, and the New People's Army. Last Dec. 30's bombings were as ghastly and abominable as the Plaza Miranda bombing. The Plaza Miranda bombing forced the hand of President Marcos to suspend the writ of habeas corpus. It laid the legal basis for the declaration of martial law in September 1972.

In last Saturday's bombings, there are the "usual suspects"—the government itself, the communists, the Abu Sayyaf/Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the moderate opposition, the "rightists." These suspects are supposed to be promoting their political agenda through the bombings. This is now the stage of passing the blame. But one question that is most disquieting is whether the bombings, and the instability they have generated, will and can be used to declare a state of national emergency. This question requires further examination. In the meantime, the most certain conclusion is that the bombings represent a failure by government of maintaining law and order.

Life lessons

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AN OLDER man dying of a slow, degenerative nervous disease. A younger man, the older man's former student, searching for answers about life and relationships. A bond rekindled between teacher and student, one last "project," of which the subject was "The Meaning of Life" and "taught from experience."

And in the end, "a funeral was held in lieu of graduation."

That, in a nutshell, is what the bestseller "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom is all.about. My friend Mila Alora, who called to ask if I had read it for if I hadn't then she would give me a copy for Christmas, said apologetically that "it's a slim book, you can finish it in one sitting," but added fervently that "what you read might change your life."

Because of cramped schedules over the holidays, my reading of "Tuesdays with Morrie" had to be spread over a number of days, through moments snatched before dropping off to sleep, or in the rare times when I had some minutes to spare for quiet reading. Which may have been, to me, a blessing in disguise. The "lessons" in the brief weekly course between Albom and his old teacher are best digested through a series of small tastings rather than in one heavy full meal. In fact, the helpings are such that they may even taste better as leftovers, or as recycled tidbits, after one has had the chance to think further on what they mean.

I don't know if I could say my life has changed after one reading of this slim volume. Contrary to my expectations, since I have what's known in the vernacular as "shallow tears," I wasn't even moved to tears. Far from being tragic, I thought the story of the last days of Morrie Schwartz was a story of triumph over the despair. One couldn't wish for a "better" death than that the old professor underwent.

* * *

WHAT did Morrie have to teach his former student, already a well-known columnist by the time they found each other again, that was worth putting into a book? What did this sociology professor, who prevailed over a hardscrabble childhood and early family tragedy, have to say to so many people all over the world?

"Love each other or perish," "Death ends a life not a relationship," "Money is not a substitute for tenderness, and power is not a substitute for tenderness. I can tell you, as I'm sitting here dying, when you most need it, neither money nor power will give you the feeling you're looking for, no matter how much of them you have."

All too true—but also all too common. For isn't that what countless preachers, teachers and yes, even our parents, have been telling us? Aren't these the gist of all the holy books, as well as of innumerable best-selling self-help and inspirational publications that people in search of answers buy and consult?

* * *

I GUESS what makes "Tuesdays with Morrie" so popular and so credible were the circumstances under which these weekly lessons were offered. At the time Albom began his regular visits with his old professor, Morrie was already confined to a wheelchair. He had lost the use of his legs, and over time even his back muscles became too weak to support his neck and head.

Interviewed by American public affairs TV host Ted Koppel some weeks before Albom's first visit, Morrie said the thing he dreaded the most was that "one day soon, someone's gonna have to wipe my ass." Long before Albom's last visit, Morrie already depended on his family and health workers to do this very private task for him, and the scent of death emanated from him even as he clung to life.

It was the way Morrie "embraced" impending death, the way he refused to let his illness conquer his spirit, turn him toward bitterness or drive him to shame and despair, that so inspired Albom and countless friends and former students who filled his days to the last. And it is this that also draws the millions who have bought copies of the book and watched the TV movie based on the account.

* * *

ON THEIR 13th Tuesday, a week before Albom bids his old professor goodbye, he asks Morrie what he would do if he had 24 hours in which he was perfectly healthy.

Albom writes that he expected Morrie to let his imagination fly, "to fly to Italy or have lunch with the President or romp on the seashore or try every exotic thing he could think of."

Instead, Morrie's "perfect day" begins and ends quite mundanely. "Let's see…I'd get up in the morning, do my exercises, have a lovely breakfast of sweet rolls and tea, go for a swim, then have my friends over for a nice lunch. I'd have them come one or two at a time so we could talk about their families, their issues, talk about how much we mean to each other.

"Then I'd like to go for a walk, in a garden with some trees, watch their colors, watch the birds, take in the nature that I haven't seen in so long now.

"In the evening, we'd all go together to a restaurant with some great pasta, maybe some duck—I love duck—and then we'd dance the rest of the night. I'd dance with all the wonderful dance partners out there, until I was exhausted. And then I'd go home and have a deep, wonderful sleep."

A day like any other, like many Morrie, his family and friends may have enjoyed countless times when he was healthier. Funny the things we take for granted and miss terribly when they're no longer within our reach.

A wish for the rest of the year, then: May all of us continue to enjoy many "days like any other" and be aware of their value every minute that we are living them.

Adriana Capuquian's prophecies

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

AFTER CLOSE to six months in the United States on a Fulbright research fellowship, I found myself wondering how come there was so much Philippine material crying out to be read and written up. If countless researchers have been to the United States before me, how come we have only scratched the tip of the proverbial iceberg? A friend explained that I seem to find so much more Filipiniana compared to others simply because I enter a library and look at everything rather than keeping myself on a narrow research question. In retrospect, it is true. I am a natural *usisero*.

While I am amazed by the research possibilities of the Internet I still rely on old fashioned card catalogues and research guides. Research, for me, always starts with a list. Sometimes I don't even have a research question because experience has proven, time and again, that the most interesting materials I have found were just there waiting to be read. When I am blessed with time and an open library system, I go through everything shelf by shelf, spine by spine, stopping only when something catches my eye.

One of my pleasant discoveries in the Newberry Library was the 1864 investigation of a certain Adriana Capuquian regarding her strange practices and utterances. I was doing research on early American archeology in the Philippines but I could not resist Adriana's surname—Capuquian—and the fact that she was sent to the town of Palapag by a mysterious old woman to deliver prophecies of death and destruction if the people did not return to "the old customs." Before seeing the document I presumed this was some sort of witch trial, that the "old customs" meant a return to pre-Spanish or pre-Christian religion. It is quite popular these days to do women's history or her-story and the case of Capuquian could probably be expanded for a paper at some historical conference.

The report was written by the Captain of Palapag on Nov. 16, 1864. He stated that Capuquian was conducted to the place of interrogation, presumably the *municipio*, by the *teniente de cuadrilleros*. She was asked to state her full name (Maria Adriana) her address (Cadaja-an, near the mountains of Gamay and the Catubig River), she was a widow, a native, a laborer who did not even know her age. Neither could she read or write. Investigation revealed that one Wednesday in August 1864, Capuquian met an old woman while she was praying the "Ave Maria" for the "Angelus." Thinking the old woman was a temptation—or at best some supernatural creature—Capuquian managed to run away crossing herself and reciting the "Creed."

Of course, the mysterious old woman is persistent and eventually, Capuquian talks to her. Capuquian was asked if she knew how to read, write and pray. Capuquian replied that she was not only illiterate, but her religious instruction was so faulty the only prayer she could recite fully was the "Ave Maria." The old woman consoled Capuquian by stating that many truths [hidden to the wise] are revealed to the kind and ignorant. Lowly as she was, Capuquian was chosen to go to the civil authorities in town and bring a message of truth. Capuquian warned the people of Palapag of the terrible punishment that was upon them if they did not return to the "old customs."

The end of the world was to be preceded by seven months of darkness, and earthquakes lasting 10 months. Moreover, it would rain ash and if the authorities did not return to the old customs despite all these unnatural occurrences it would rain fire for one week ending on Jan. 17, [1865?]. Capuquian made it clear that all these calamities could be avoided if there was a return to the "old customs." To my great disappointment these meant a rollback in prices of basic food and a return to some rather old fashioned ways. The mysterious old woman, through Capuquian, demanded; that pork and fish prices be reduced to the "old" level of half a *real*. The price of palay back to four *reales* per cavan. There was a call for children to honor their parents. That would have been a very general thing to ask for, but then Capuquian said children should serve their parents—on their knees—for the duration of meals! That children return to kissing their parents' hands. Adults were not spared, women were asked to stop playing cards and to be conscious about their clothing—do not leave *camisas* open at the collar. Men were advised to have more decorum, whatever that means. The government was told to reduce tribute from one peso to seven *reales*.

We do not know what became of Adriana Capuquian after this investigation because he paper trail is short. Was Capuquian imprisoned? Was she committed to an asylum for the insane? Why did she have such an obscene surname? Were the people of Palapag frightened by her prophecies? How did they react when none of the predicted calamities occurred in 1865? There is so much more to this document than meets the eye. This is my first column for 2001, the first of the new millennium and the case of Adriana Capuquian made me look back on my own "old customs" and figure out how much of the old to keep and how much of it to be discarded.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@pusit.admu.edu.ph

Let's not forget the little girl

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

IT was a gruesome photo on this paper's front page last Sunday: the limp body of a little girl in a white dress, her face an unrecognizable mass of blood and torn flesh. She was identified by her father only yesterday: Crisel Acusin, 8 years old.

Shocking that photo may have been to some, we hope it is seared in our minds. As much as, maybe even more than, that other more well-known image of state terrorism, that of Ninoy Aquino, lying dead on the tarmac in 1983, a pool of blood beneath his shattered head.

No, the little girl wasn't like Aquino, who knowingly risked his life to fight a dictatorship. The little girl donning her white Christmas dress was probably just on her way to visit relatives, or her godfather to get her Christmas present. Or maybe she had finally convinced her mother to buy her new shoes, and they were on their way to some inexpensive stalls. Maybe it was even her first time to ride on the LRT, and her eyes were all aglow watching the people around her when the bomb exploded.

She probably didn't even know what all the things the grown-ups have been talking about so often recently, like "impeachment," "corruption," "Jose Velarde."

No, she wasn't an Aquino. But her brutal murder tells us how bad our situation has become, more than Aquino's assassination told how bad the Marcos regime had become. Hers, that of the child whose limb was severed, and those of the other bombing victims: this is the slaughter of the innocents.

The bombing victims and Aquino with his skull shattered—they have some things in common.

Their murders were undertaken at the height of a growing protest movement to oust a President. Right after both these killings, authorities quickly blamed the Communist Party of the Philippines, although this time the allegation is that the communists were in alliance with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Both the two attacks were not only extreme forms of savagery. They also trampled on all notions of being human. A crowd had been waiting to greet Aquino as he arrived. In full view of a planeload of people, the assassins matter-of-factly fetched the opposition senator, and then shot him in broad daylight.

It was much worse in the Saturday bombings. Powerless people, the ultimate victims of government misrule and elite greed, were the targets. The atrocity was committed just before the New Year holiday, which we celebrate for the hope it represents for the future .

A terrorized, shocked population was the immediate consequence of both the killings. In the case of last Saturday's bombings, how many parents now would beg their children to stay away from the rallies?

In the Aquino murder, terror was very soon transformed into rage against the Marcos dictatorship.

We hope it still will this time. Let's not forget that mutilated little girl. More than Aquino's assassination, her killing and those of the others—and the injury to scores of others—are deep wounds inflicted on the nation's soul. These can be healed only by justice.

* * *

An anonymous e-mailer sent us the following message Dec. 31:

"I have information from a reliable source that members of the Kuratong Baleleng group were summoned to Manila to do some missions. A member whom I personally know did not go. They may be the group used to do the bombings. Most, if not all members, of the Kuratong Baleleng group were former soldiers. What was needed, though, is a good plan and an officer to carry out the plan."

For readers unfamiliar with the Kuratong Baleleng group, it was a ruthless band of kidnappers and bank robbers from Ozamiz City in Mindanao. The group had been responsible for many of the kidnappings and violent bank robberies in the 1990s. However, there have been allegations that they had been actually under the protection of ranking Philippine National Police officers. Eleven members of the group were killed in 1995 by the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission, chaired by then Vice President Joseph Estrada who had as his operations chief now PNP Director General Panfilo Lacson. While Lacson and his officers claimed that it was a firefight, a police officer came out as a witness alleging the 11 were summarily executed. Lacson and his men though were later cleared of the charges.

A good friend of mine, who comes from Ozamiz City, explained that the gang actually consisted of two clans. These clans' patriarchs are even respected in Ozamiz as "successful" Robin Hoods. The Kuratong Baleleng members who were killed in 1995 were members of one clan, who had broken off from the other. The latter allegedly cooperated in the capture of the 11 who were killed. My friend claims that this surviving clan subsequently has been close to certain top PNP and elected officials, and were allowed to oversee *jueteng* operations in Mindanao. There were reports this year that over a hundred *lechons* (roasted pigs) from Ozamiz City were sent to Malacañang for Estrada's birthday party last April.

* * *

The bombings were clearly intended to bring the country to its knees. The bomb which exploded at a closed gas station was actually first found, packaged as expensive whiskey, at a garden of the Dusit Hotel in the Makati financial district. If it had exploded where it was first left, it would have most likely killed tourists and business travelers. That would have meant a standstill in the tourism business, and even of new foreign investments.

Another bomb, which exploded at a cargo terminal, was intended to ignite fuel tanks at the international airport. If enough damage had been done to the airport terminal that required its closure, that would have meant the end of our computer-chip industry, one of the main pillars of our economy now. The bulk of chips exported abroad are still by air, through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Mark V., an American from New York, sent me an e-mail which very well describes the impact of the bombings of visitors:

"I was at the US Embassy to get my certificate of legal capacity to get married in the Philippines. I went by the hotel where one bomb went off. I also went to the Makati financial district to visit my wife and father-in-law's employer. And, of course I went through the airport several times in both my arrival and departure from the US."

* * *

Results of an online poll by this paper's website, Inquirer.net, as of 10 a.m. yesterday, show that 73 percent of 3,118 respondents don't believe the government line that Muslim or communist terrorists were responsible for the Saturday bombings.

* * *

Comments: rtiglao@inq7.net

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Marriages are working in RP

KUDOS to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' research office under Fr. Roberto Latorre for its research on "The State of Marriage in the Philippines."

Using government data culled from the "1995 Census of Population, Report No. 2: Socio-economic and Demographic Characteristics" of the National Statistics Office, the book was able to quantitatively assert that marriage and family are alive and well in the Philippines. The institution of marriage and the family is not endangered contrary to assertions of foreign-funded feminist and population control groups that there is a widespread social problem of de facto broken marriages in the country.

From this government data, the book established that 31.13 percent of the marriageable population get married by the time they are 24 years old; 62.86 percent by 29 years old; 80.41 percent by the time they are 39 and peaking to 94.3 percent by the time they are 64 years old. These indicate that, as of 1995, we Filipinos still have a very high regard for the institution of marriage. But what is most revealing in the data is that only a negligible 1.17 percent of marriages were reported as ending in separation or divorce. This means that an overwhelming 98.83 percent of Filipino marriages remain intact.

Lobby groups have been pushing for the legalization of divorce in the country because they claim that there is an increasing number of failed marriages. The book has exposed their lies.—**JAIME B. LEORNAS, information officer, Pro-Life Philippines, San Lorenzo Ruiz Bldg., 2486 Legarda St., Sampaloc, Manila**

LETTERS

Subdivisions own electric posts

WHEN we settled at 2nd Reyville Subdivision in Las Piñas, we residents paid the Manila Electric Co. to put up electric posts, wires, transformers, etc. Ergo, those are ours.

However, I see that Meralco has been leasing the electric lines in our private subdivision to other utility firms (telephone, cable TV, etc.) without permission. In fairness, shouldn't Meralco credit the income to our street lighting bill?

The same should be true in other private subdivisions.—**LARRY G. NOVENARIO, 2-2 Molave St., 2nd Reyville Subd., Pamplona 3, Las Piñas City**

Few good men propping up Erap

PAGING Jose Pardo, Edgardo Angara, Horacio Morales, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, Ed dela Torre and Dr. Alberto Romualdez—these are among the few good men left to prop up President Estrada's iniquitous administration. We know that they joined the government service with the best of intentions, and their track record has proven these intentions. But as they say, the way to hell is paved with good intentions, which is precisely where the Estrada administration is leading us.

After the damaging revelations of Clarissa Ocampo, this is their last chance to join the new breed of heroes that "Juetengate" has spawned: Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, a.k.a. "The Good Thief"; Rep. Manny Villar; Emma Lim; Menchu Itchon; Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.; Mar Roxas; and the Equitable PCI Bank (not anymore Acquittable or Inequitable) group headed by Ocampo.

We know that they are men of vision, integrity and performance. How can they continue lending their good names to an administration that is so thoroughly involved in graft and corruption, illegal gambling, degradation of women and cronyism? We know they are performing very well in their own little turfs. But can they continue ignoring the national interest because of their personal closeness to the President? Will they sacrifice the whole nation for one man, even if his name happens to be Joseph Ejercito Estrada or Jose Velarde?—**SAMUEL J. YAP, 2 Verbena, Doña Manuela, Pamplona 3, Las Piñas City**

Caught up with the legalese?

I AM trying very hard to sit through the impeachment trial despite its almost comic turns and (more often than not) idiotic parody of what is supposed to be (at the very least) "respectable" judicial proceedings. But one recent night's session was the clincher. Are we in a time warp here? Is this the Agrava Commission all over again? It looks like the Honorable Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. himself is getting caught up with the technicalities, favoring mindless objections by the defense in favor of crucial facts and evidence. Is he already showing his true color, or is he simply getting lost in "Pinoy legalese"? (Michael Tan, am I right?)

Whatever the case, I hope this serves as a warning that the "court" is under the watchful eyes of many enlightened Filipinos. Better to finish this thing in no time, than to insult our judgment and waste precious wattage with "*moro-moro.*"—**GM MARCIAL, Baclaran, Parañaque City**

Who changed the President's mind on death penalty?

SUCCESS has many fathers. I wrote on the death penalty (PDI, 4/6/00) and the fact that many priests of my Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (BBC) were silent on it even after the Vatican had written to me to support my stand that the death penalty is immoral and ineffective.

Now, Brother Mike Velarde claims, Dec. 13, that he gets the credit for President Estrada's abolishing the death penalty. But my friend, Bishop Emeritus Antonio Fortich, tells me that he embraced the President in the Bacolod church on Dec. 10 to the cheers of a crowd of 3,000 inside and it was then that a humbled President did a reversal on the death sentence. This follows my published letter two weeks earlier that pointed out that the penalty for plunder that may embroil the President was death! On Dec. 5, friend and former Solicitor General Frank Chavez was quoted, "Chavit: Include Erap in plunder charges."

The death row prisoners I know are thanking Bishop Fortich for giving them life, and a happier Christmas.—**EARL K. WILKINSON, Makati City**

Are we educating all Filipino children?

I VISITED my elementary school a few days ago. It is an urban, private school. When I studied there 10 years ago, the population was around 300. Now, the school houses just a little over a hundred. I asked my mother why there was a decrease in the number of students. She said that most of the students transferred to public schools. In the process, the public school students were displaced and because of the economic crisis, some stopped going to school.

Education is very much affected by the downward spiraling of our economy. Much as parents would want to send their children to school, they just can't. Prices of goods are very high. Fares are soaring. Tuition fees are increasing. Everything is becoming more expensive. Parents cannot afford it anymore. Education has therefore become a luxury. It is no longer a right of a child because reality tells us that not everybody gets to exercise that right.

What, then, will happen to our children? Will they just sit and wait for our nation to recuperate before they can go to school? What future will they have with this kind of system? The more our children stagnate in this kind of condition, the more they are robbed of what is rightfully theirs—education.

And as we engross ourselves in the Senate showdown, let us not forget the hopes of our children to get a better education, or, as in some cases, any education at all.—**JUDITH IRIS KAYE S. PAGSANJAN, UP Diliman, Quezon City**

Difficulty with English

MA. Ceres P. Doyo in her column (Human Face, PDI, 12/21/00), touched on the subject regarding mispronounced English words as uttered by many among the lawyers and the senator-judges at the impeachment trial.

Apparently English seems to be the language favored by this country to be its "official language." If this is so, it behooves, therefore, that all of the officials in the executive, the legislative, the judicial, the military, the national police to be proficient in English.

One of the reasons why the impeachment court's proceedings seem to move as slow as thick molasses, is that many of the senator-judges, the counsels for the defense and the prosecution, lack proficiency in speaking English.

They grope for words. They compose and speak their thoughts in halting sentences. Some cannot even effectively express a simple idea.

If these people wish to continue using English, they should think of forming an English language clinic. There they can practice by conversing with each other only in English, much as the members of the Alliance Français or the Sociedad de la Lengua Española are coached by native speakers. This should help limber their tongues.—**JANE WELBA GUTIERREZ, Candelaria, Quezon**

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The WORLD

Margot J. Baterina, Editor

Clinton, Arafat meet in Washington for last-ditch dialogue

JERUSALEM—Yasser Arafat headed to a Washington meeting with US President Bill Clinton Tuesday in efforts at a peace breakthrough but Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak said he doubted Arafat is serious enough to reach an agreement soon.

Prospects a deal could be reached before Clinton leaves office Jan. 20 appeared to dwindle further late Monday when at least 50 Israelis were injured from a car bombing in the coastal city of Netanya.

The attack shows Arafat and his Palestinian Authority are "giving encouragement" for anti-Israeli violence despite the little time left to work out an agreement, Barak said.

"Since Arafat has wasted most of this time in dragging his feet . . . we have very serious doubts about the seriousness of his intentions to reach an arrangement," Barak told Army radio.

Arafat agreed late Monday in a phone conversation with Clinton to travel to Washington to meet him to discuss the American president's proposal for a final peace agreement.

The Palestinian leader has yet to issue an official response to Clinton's ideas. Israel has accepted them in principle.

Arafat spokesperson Nabil Aburedeneh called Arafat's trip "a decisive visit at which the future of the peace process will be determined." Arafat departed Gaza Tuesday.

CLINTON

Talk prospects have been stalled for more than a week due to the Palestinians' insistence that the US clarify the proposal. US officials, for their part, have refused to discuss details of individual proposals until the Palestinians commit to the talks.

All contacts between Israel and the Palestinians have been cut off, Barak said Tuesday. Official talks broke down after violence broke out three months ago. The bloodshed has killed 356 people, almost all of them Palestinians.

A spokesperson for Clinton's National Security Council, P.J. Crowley, said Arafat and Clinton decided after a 45-minute phone call Monday they should meet directly to seek a "common understanding" about what the talks would cover.

Barak told Clinton in a phone conversation late Monday that he suspected the Palestinians do not want to reach a deal in the coming weeks, Army radio reported.

Meanwhile, Israeli officials intensified security efforts, including closing the international airport in Palestinian Gaza Strip, after the bombing in Netanya.

The bomb was detonated Monday evening in a parked car in the city located 35 km north of Tel Aviv, sending off three rapid-fire blasts that shattered windows and blew apart vehicles on a crowded shopping street.

"Cars were ripped up, women (were) screaming," a witness told Army radio. Police ordered people from the area for fear of more bombs.

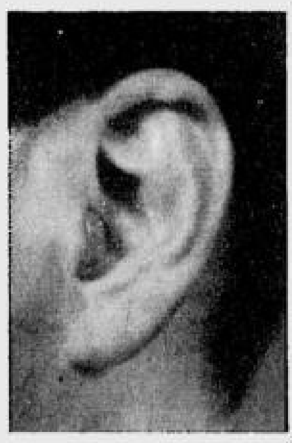
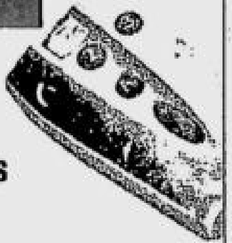
Israel radio said 54 people received treatment. Only one was critically hurt—probably the man suspected of being the bomber, Israeli Police Commissioner Shlomo Aharonishki said. *AP*

Taiwanese ships make first legal direct trips to China

XIAMEN, China—Three Taiwanese ships made the first legal direct voyages in 51 years Tuesday to mainland China, carrying government officials, religious pilgrims and hopes for better relations.

Crowds of well wishers with firecrackers and dragon dancers saw the vessels off from Kinmen and Matsu, Taiwanese coastal islets that used to be shelled regularly from nearby China. They arrived a few hours later in the Chinese ports of Xiamen and Mawei, which had been off-limits to direct travel since the two sides split in a civil war that ended in 1949.

Taiwan lifted its ban on travel from Kinmen and Matsu on New Year's Day, legalizing a trade carried on for years by smugglers. A Taiwanese tourist boat on what was to be the first crossing Monday was forced to turn back by bad weather. *AP*

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'Killing fields' tribunal approved by Cambodia solons

PHNOM PENH—Cambodian lawmakers on Tuesday approved legislation to bring former leaders of the notorious Khmer Rouge regime to trial, pushing forward a process that has been stalled for nearly a year.

"Today the National Assembly has approved the draft law on the Khmer Rouge trial unanimously," Vice Chair Heng Samrin announced in parliament.

Debate on the draft law began on Friday and resumed on Tuesday morning following a three-day break for the New Year holiday.

Ninety-two of the National Assembly's 122 members were present. Among those absent was Chairman Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who was celebrating his 57th birthday.

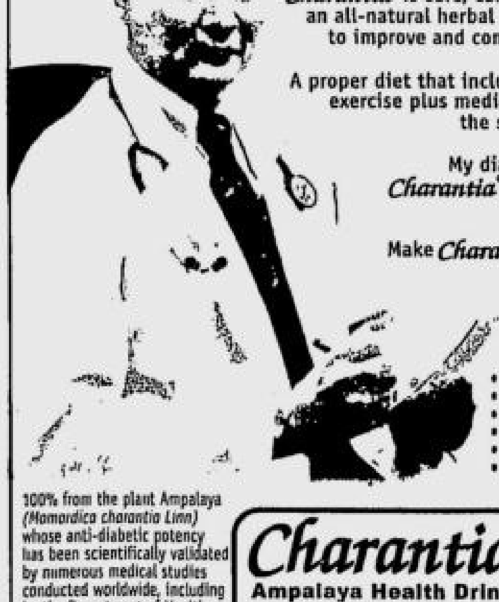
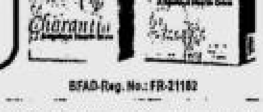
Heng Samrin told reporters he was delighted.

"I am very happy that today the National Assembly has passed the long-awaited draft law on the Khmer Rouge trial, allowing us to fulfill the goal of all the Cambodian people and also the world to try leaders of the genocidal regime," he said.

After nearly a year of negotiations, Cambodia and the United Nations reached agreement in principal last April on a process to try former leaders of the radical communist group, responsible for an estimated 1.7 million deaths during their 1975-79 "killing fields" rule.

The tribunal, to be held in Phnom Penh, will include both Cambodian and foreign judges and prosecutors and focus on crimes committed by senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge during their April 1975 to January 1979 rule. No actual defendants have been named yet.

"I would like to appeal to our compatriots who were with the Khmer Rouge in the past, please do not be scared because (we) will try only the top leaders and the people who had direct responsibility for the genocide," Heng Samrin said. *Reuters*

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Brothel owners in Texas hold Asian women captive

HOUSTON—In rundown houses only blocks from Houston's gleaming downtown office buildings, brothel owners held young Asian women captive in a modern form of slavery, federal officials said.

The Chinese and Thai women smuggled into the country were handcuffed, chained or tied with leather restraints behind barred windows in at least three brothels and were forced to have sex with about 15 men daily until each raised $40,000 to pay the smugglers, authorities say. They were not allowed to make phone calls, write letters or leave secret compartments in the houses where they were hidden.

"Even when they weren't physically restrained, they were held captive psychologically, by threats and by fear in a country where they had no papers and couldn't speak the language," Assistant US Attorney Edward Gallagher said.

Two people convicted of smuggling the women into the United States and selling them into prostitution are set to be sentenced Thursday before a federal judge.

They are among seven people charged as a result of Operation Little Dragon, a two-year undercover investigation by the Houston district of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and officials in Thailand and Chile.

Richard Kuniansky, the attorney representing Sriwan "Sonya" Sakyai, a prostitute and ring member, said federal officials are misinformed if they believe the women are exploited.

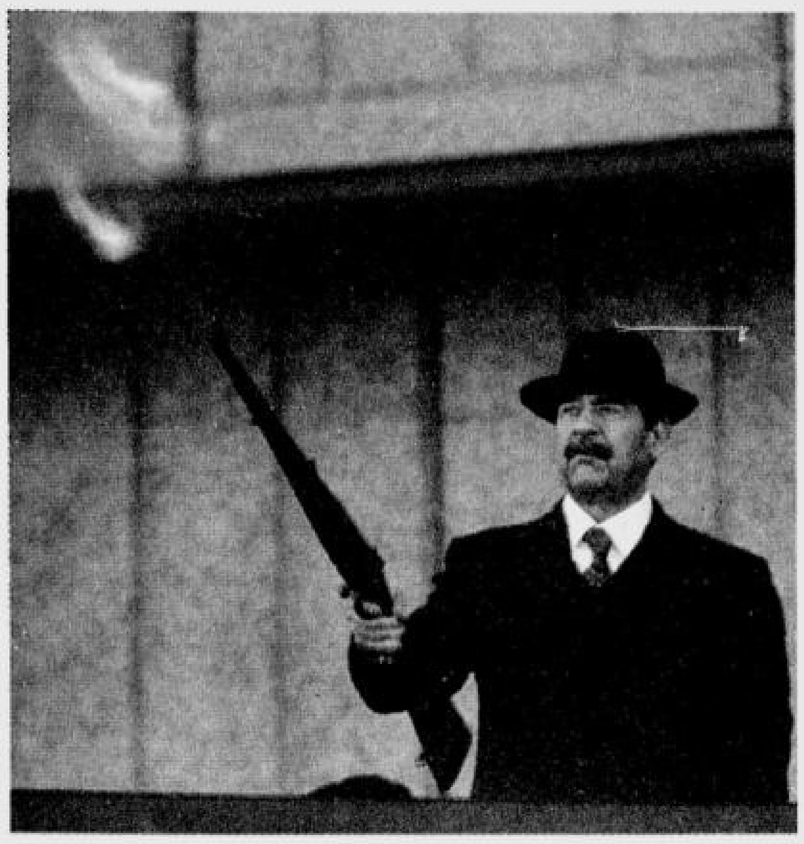
"What they view as horrible smugglers taking advantage of women, these girls look at it as the break of a lifetime," he said. "These women make less than $1,000 a year in Thailand. Here they make enough money to pay off their $40,000 contract in a year. The government should quit wasting astronomical amounts of money on victimless crimes."

Kuniansky said the women commonly are locked in at night and have limited access to a single phone, although they sometimes go on group shopping trips to a mall. He said he knows nothing of restraints or abuse.

Like federal agents, Kuniansky, a former assistant US attorney and state prosecutor, said Houston is a hub for prostitute-smuggling groups.

"It goes on more in Houston than any other city, although Los Angeles and Atlanta are also big," he said.

The ring, suspected to be headed by a Bangkok woman, smuggled about 30 women a month over at least two years, says Roger Piper, director of the Houston immigration office. *AP*



SHOTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein fires shots into the air from a rifle held in one hand on New Year's Eve, presiding over what appeared to be the biggest military parade in Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf War. The parade displayed sophisticated surface-to-surface and anti-aircraft missiles, artillery and over 1,000 modern, Russian-made tanks as well as infantry units. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Indon minister quits

JAKARTA—Indonesia's State Minister for Administrative Reforms Ryaas Rasyid resigned Tuesday citing differences with President Abdurrahman Wahid over the implementation of a regional autonomy plan. Rasyid told journalists he had delivered his resignation letter to the president in person at the Merdeka place, but a presidential spokesperson said Wahid had yet to decide whether to accept it. Rasyid cited "differences of ideas" with Wahid over the formation of a special agency on regional autonomy policies as one of his main reasons for quitting the Cabinet. ``I have long proposed the need of a special agency to handle regional autonomy policies. He (Wahid) was of the opinion that such an agency was needed . . . however it is different than what I proposed," Rasyid said, without giving further details. *AFP*

Bush readies school plan

AUSTIN—President-elect George W. Bush is readying an education package that would aggressively test students and cut federal funds for schools that fail to measure up. Aides say that despite significant opposition in Congress, he will not abandon a school voucher plan. As he puts the finishing touches on his Cabinet this week, Bush also is weighing how to present his education proposals to Congress. He has said improving public schools is his No. 1 priority, and lawmakers are certain to see his proposals just after he takes office Jan. 20. Key elements of the plan include flexibility for states and local districts in their education programs, and increased student testing. *AP*

2nd Korean summit set

SEOUL—South Korea's President Kim Dae-jung and North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-il will meet in Seoul this year, a top minister said Tuesday ending doubts that the head of the communist North would travel to the South's capital. Although Kim Dae-jung has said he expects his Northern counterpart to visit South Korea sometime in the spring, the exact venue has never been given. Speculation had been rampant that the two Kims would hold their second summit on the South's resort island of Cheju for the safety of the North Korean leader, who has rarely traveled abroad. *AFP*

Militia boss trial opens

JAKARTA—A notorious former East Timorese militia leader went on trial here Tuesday charged with inciting criminal activities against the state during a weapons handover in West Timor. Wearing Army fatigues, a bandana in the red and white colors of the Indonesian national flag, sunglasses and black beret, Eurico Guterres was cheered by supporters as he walked into the North Jakarta District Court. "Long Live Eurico," his supporters packing the courtroom gallery shouted. The leader of the Aitarak (Thorn) militia, Guterres was arrested at a hotel here on Oct. 4 for allegedly ordering his men to snatch back weapons surrendered to police in West Timor during a ceremony in September attended by Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri. *AFP*

700 sect members nabbed

BEIJING—Police beat and arrested members of the outlawed Falun Gong spiritual group as hundreds defied a huge security presence to protest in Beijing's central Tiananmen Square Monday. Small groups demonstrating against the government's 17-month ban on the movement popped up all over the square throughout the day as thousands of police and soldiers grabbed them and forced them into vans. AFP journalists saw at least 700 members of the group trucked away as some 20 police vans roamed the square, while thousands of Chinese and overseas tourists looked on. Falun Gong followers said the protests had begun on New Year's Eve and resumed early Monday, suggesting the number arrested could be significantly higher. *AFP*

Aceh talks in Geneva

JAKARTA—The Indonesian government will hold talks in Geneva next week with the exiled leaders of Aceh separatists, presidential spokesperson Wimar Witoelar said Tuesday. "On Jan. 8 the director general of politics of the foreign ministry, Hasan Wirayudha, will meet Hasan Tiro or his representative in a bid to seek a solution to the problem in Aceh," Witoelar told journalists. Tiro, who is based in Sweden, is the supreme leader of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), which has been fighting for 25 years to set up an independent Islamic sultanate in Aceh province. *AFP*

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

3rd quake sends Davao folk to panic

MATI, Davao Oriental—A third earthquake in as many days shook parts of Mindanao yesterday, sending people out of homes, offices and schools and keeping them on the alert for possible aftershocks.

The quake, which struck at about 3:30 p.m., inflicted no serious injury or damage, according to authorities, but it was measured at Intensity 6.2 by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

But it caused cracks on walls and ceilings on the second and third floors of the Davao Oriental Provincial Hospital.

A movement in the Philippine trench, a fault line running along the country's eastern Pacific coast, triggered the quake yesterday, the Phivolcs said.

The Phivolcs said the epicenter of yesterday's quake was at sea, some 117 kilometers southeast of this town.

It was the third earthquake in three days in Mindanao. On Dec. 31, the quake also struck Mati but the epicenter was at sea, 135 kilometers east of Tandag, Surigao del Sur.

An empty hut owned by Arcel Dangala in Purok Dalampasigan in Tandag collapsed during the quake.

Milagros Rabanes, provincial planning and development officer of Davao Oriental, said the first two floors of the provincial hospital building were constructed in the early 1990s but the third floor was completed only in 1998.

The Phivolcs said the earthquakes on Dec. 31, Jan. 1 and yesterday were all tectonic in origin and were generated by ground movements at the Philippine Trench.

Yesterday's quake registered Intensity 4 in Bislig, Surigao del Sur; 4 in Mati, Davao Oriental; 3 in the cities of Davao, Kidapawan and General Santos City; 2 in the cities of Cotabato, Cagayan de Oro and Butuan and Hibok-Hibok in Camiguin province; and 1 in Surigao and Cebu cities.

Desiderio Cabanlit, chief of the Phivolcs Davao City office, said yesterday's quake was possibly triggered by stress caused by successive ground movements along the Philippine Trench on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

Cabanlit said aftershocks are expected from more ground movements in the area. But he said people need not worry as the aftershocks are likely to be weaker.

Residents in Davao City again rushed out of their homes, offices and malls when the quake struck.

"There was panic outside my office," said Rhouala Amoroso, a Cagayan de Oro nurse. "People were running and shouting."

The country sits on at least four major faults and lies in the so-called Pacific "ring of fire," where earthquakes and volcanic activity are common.

On Monday, people thought that it was the end of the world on the first day of the third millennium.

Thousands of residents rushed out of their homes and buildings, causing minor injuries to some. Cracks appeared in some buildings, glass windows were broken and appliances fell off their stands in this town, the area nearest the epicenter.

The Phivolcs said the Monday quake struck at 2:57 p.m., registering a magnitude of 6.6 at the Richter Scale at the epicenter at sea, 65 kilometers southeast of Mati.

The quake hit the scales at Intensity 6 in Bislig, Surigao del Sur, where a quake was also recorded a day earlier, at 3:51 p.m., with a magnitude of 5.1. That quake's epicenter was located at an area some 135 kilometers east of Tandag, Surigao del Sur.

As it radiated out, the New Year's Day quake registered Intensity 5 in the cities of Davao, Butuan and General Santos; 4 in Kidapawan City; 3 in the cities of Cotabato, Surigao, Cagayan, Iligan and Cebu and the towns of Tagbilaran in Bohol and Palo, Leyte; and 2 in Dumaguete City.

Several aftershocks were also recorded by Phivolcs. ***Ferdinand Zuasola and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Bloody end of year for 2 troopers in Legazpi

LEGAZPI CITY—Five suspected New People's Army sparrows ended the year 2000 by gunning down two Army soldiers in the flea market of southern Barangay Banquerohan, some 18 kilometers from here, at about 8:30 a.m., Sunday.

Killed were Sgt. Alfredo Paitan and Pfc. Alex Vibar of the Charlie Co. The two were buying supplies for their unit when attacked by the suspects, who fled toward the city proper after the killings.

Police investigators recovered shells of bullets for M-16 assault rifles, cal. 45 pistols and 9mm firearms at the crime site.

Leftist rebels had launched attacks against government men in at least four occasions during the last three months.

On Oct. 10, two soldiers were killed and three others were hurt when the armored personnel carrier they were riding in hit a land mine planted by the rebels.

They were then on their way to reinforce a military detachment guarding the Philippine National Oil Co. installation in Barangay San Isidro, San Lorenzo, Camarines Norte, that was under siege by rebels.

Two days earlier, at least 60 rebels attacked a "Kababayan Center" in Barangay Tandaay, Nabua, Camarines Sur, but were repulsed by government troopers who killed two of them.

In Caramoan, Camarines Sur, the rebels staged a daylight raid on the municipal building and police headquarters, killing two policemen and injuring four others.

An Army detachment in Barangay Tastas, Ligao, Albay, had been attacked four times by the rebels who failed to overrun the camp.

Army Col. Pendatun Guro, Armed Forces civil-military relations spokesperson for Bicol, said they expect bigger NPA operations in the future.

In Isabela, military and police officials have sent a contingent of Army soldiers and policemen to reinforce the police forces of three southern Isabela towns amid reports of intensified NPA attacks.

Intelligence reports on Sunday said NPA rebels have targeted the police stations of San Guillermo, Angadanan and Echague.

Both San Guillermo and Angadanan are remote towns while Echague lies along the national highway in the province.

Before the arrival of the additional forces, police officials had received reports that several NPA rebels were seen in the mountain villages of the three towns.

But the arrival of the police and Army teams in San Guillermo at about 5 a.m. on Jan. 1 reportedly resulted in a misencounter, after policemen mistook the team for NPA rebels.

Reports said a brief exchange of gunfire occurred as local policemen failed to immediately recognize the team members as it was still dark when they arrived. No one was reported hurt, however.

NPA rebels earlier raided the Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, municipal hall compound and police station. ***Reports from Rey Nasol and Tony Macasinag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Chavit steals limelight from floods, ambushes

BY THE PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
AND PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

YEARENDER

BAGUIO CITY—Unlike 1999 that was marked by several major road accidents in mountain highways and by plane crashes, the year 2000 passed with relative silence in Northern Luzon.

The biggest news story that came from the region was Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson's revelation that President Estrada received payoffs from "jueteng" and kickbacks from tobacco excise taxes. Singson's revelation led to the impeachment of Mr. Estrada.

In Central Luzon, however, the year was marked by violence as several ambushes that claimed the lives of public officials occurred.

Central Luzon also experienced widespread flooding and displacement of residents due to strong typhoons that ravaged the region.

The issues of smuggling, hot cars, toxic wastes and the Visiting Forces Agreement also pushed Central Luzon to the news pages in 2000.

Cordillera, Ilocandia

President Estrada's ambiguous policy on indigenous peoples became apparent in 2000 when he froze the budget of the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Executive Order 270, which Mr. Estrada signed, terminated the Cordillera Executive Board and the Cordillera Regional Assembly, agencies operating under his supervision but which were born out of a 1986 peace settlement.

These agencies were tasked by former President Corazon Aquino's Executive Order 220 to prepare the provinces of Benguet, Abra, Ifugao, Mt. Province, Kalinga, Apayao and Baguio City for an autonomous government prescribed by the 1987 Constitution.

President Estrada also froze the budget of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and formed a presidential task force to supervise indigenous peoples' concerns while the constitutionality of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (Ipra) was being resolved by the Supreme Court.

In November, good news greeted the region's indigenous peoples when the Supreme Court, after more than a year, declared Ipra constitutional.

Cordillerans have added their voices to the mounting calls for President Estrada's resignation through protest rallies in the region.

Cordillera activists performed indigenous cleansing rituals at the gates of the Voice of America compound in Baguio where multimillion-peso log cabins allegedly owned by President Estrada and his cronies were being built.

The controversial mansion on Paterno Street owned by businessman Manuel Zamora, but was rumored to be owned by Mr. Estrada, was also stained with sacrificial chicken blood by the protesters.

Cordillera Representatives Ronald Cosalan (Benguet), Josephine Dominguez (Mt. Province) and Lawrence Wacnang (Kalinga) also signed the articles of impeachment against Mr. Estrada.

But the biggest blow against Mr. Estrada came from Singson whose allegations that the President took P130 million in kickbacks from excise taxes under the Virginia Tobacco Act meant for tobacco farmers and P500 million from jueteng sparked the countrywide protests against Mr. Estrada.

Singson, a close friend of Mr. Estrada since the former actor's LVN studio days, said he was forced to rat on the President because his life was already put in danger. Malacañang, however, said Singson was peeved because Mr. Estrada was about to give the Bingo 2-Ball franchise in Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte to Singson's rivals and political enemies.

The Marcoses of Ilocos Norte were supportive of Mr. Estrada but skirmishes between Marcos loyalists and the President forced the political clan to distance themselves from Mr. Estrada and create instead an alternative "Third Force."

Pangasinan

Although most Pangasinan congressmen led protest rallies calling for Mr. Estrada to resign, most of the province's 48 mayors reiterated their position to support the President until his term ends in 2004.

Singaporean vessel Nol Shedar spilled 57,000 liters of oil along the Lingayen Gulf and spoiled 2,700 hectares of coral reefs in the coastal town of Bolinao in January.

The Bolinao municipal government filed a P200-million damage suit against the management of Nol Shedar.

On a bright note, Angela Baraquio, a schoolteacher in Hawaii and whose roots are in Aguilar, Pangasinan, won the 2000 Miss America pageant.

Baraquio is the first Asian-American to win the title. She plans to visit Pangasinan this year.

Central Luzon

The police crackdown against jueteng was the year's biggest letdown in Central Luzon, leading many to think that all the warnings and the raids since March were all for show.

Quick Pick 2 and Bingo 2-Ball, the government's legal versions of jueteng, not only failed but entangled President Estrada in a much bigger mess.

Despite the juetenggate scandal and impeachment trial, the illegal numbers game has gone unabated.

Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, a suspected big time jueteng financier based in Pampanga, left the country in October just as the juetenggate scandal was heating up.

Jose Antonio Gonzalez, chair of the Mondragon Group of companies that control the Mimosa Leisure Estate, later revealed that President Estrada's friends pressured him to give them shares of his company.

Despite protests, American troops made a comeback in Philippine territory via the Visiting Forces Agreement and through exercises held in Central Luzon and Cebu.

The Presidential Commission on the VFA sought to allay the effects of the military exercises on health, environment, tribal communities and prostitution in Central Luzon communities that formerly hosted American bases.

After nine years of taking to the streets, calling attention to more than 100 deaths and prodding officials to listen and act, more than 300 toxic waste victims in Clark and Subic finally took their cases to Philippine courts.

In their damage suits, they are claiming $102 billion and P52 billion from the US and Philippine governments, respectively.

The death of child toxic warrior Crizel Jane Valencia in February was not in vain. Cleanup activists raised the toxic waste problem in Washington D.C., with Valencia becoming the face of human suffering.

President Estrada, through Executive Order 202 signed in January, created a task force that would oversee the removal of hazardous wastes in Clark and Subic. However, a bilateral agreement on environmental cooperation that he and President Clinton signed in July, did not address the issue.

Last June, through a resolution filed by Pampanga Rep. Oscar Rodriguez, Congress sought the extension of the term of the Mt. Pinatubo Commission to 2002.

But Malacañang instead opted for the agency's closure. More than 100 MPC personnel have been laid off in December. The remaining 60 others will have to complete the transition tasks.

Alleged irregularities attending the construction of the Baliuag-Candaba flyover in Bulacan opened a can of worms at the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Invitation bids for 46 more projects throughout the region were also falsified or were not widely disseminated, indicating violations in transparency rules on government contracts.

The year was marked by killings.

The victims included former Lanao del Norte Rep. Mario Hisuler, three companions of former Porac Mayor Roy David, former San Ildefonso Mayor Honorato Galvez, Doña Remedios Trinidad Mayor Esteban Paulino and policemen.

A splinter communist group—Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan—claimed three ambushes. The rest of the cases have yet to be solved.

The Abu Sayyaf's torture and murder of Claretian priest Fr. Rhoel Gallardo stirred rage among Central Luzon residents, especially in his home province Zambales. His death heightened the clamor for peace.

Five strong typhoons hit the region. The floods killed 20 people, mostly children, and affected about two million people.

The year ended with Hacienda Luisita grabbing attention, raising again the issue of the futility or success of the government's land reform program.

Newspapers were replete with reports of smuggling of imported chicken, duty-free goods, luxury cars and other hot items by alleged cronies of the President.

The Clark International Airport has been almost idle under the Estrada administration. The pro-airport group Pinoy Gumising Ka Movement has blamed Mr. Estrada's cronies for the airport's fate.

In October, scientists and researchers at the Central Luzon State University and the Philippine Carabao Center in Nueva Ecija scored a breakthrough in the improvement of a native breed of goats using embryo transfer technology.

Two cities—Balanga in Bataan and the Science City of Muñoz in Nueva Ecija—were created after residents endorsed their conversions last year. ***Reports from Vincent Cabreza, Frank Cimatu, Yolanda Fuertes and Gobleth Moulic, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

THE HEAT was turned up in Baguio City as protesters rally to demand President Estrada's resignation.
TOOTS SOBERANO

IN PANGASINAN, the President basks in the warm welcome of fans and supporters.
TOOTS SOBERANO

Rising unemployment greets 2001 in W. Visayas

BY JOY C. DE LEON
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The year 2001 may be another bright, lucky year for those who believe in Chinese numerology but not for Shirley Chu, 32, an unemployed single mother of two boys.

Chu lost her job when the retail store she was working at for six years decided to downsize its workforce of 24 to 15 personnel in September last year.

Chu is only one of the 6,609 people in the region who were laid off from January to September in 2000, based on the records of the Department of Labor and Employment in Western Visayas (DOLE-7).

Of the number, 2,829 were retrenched workers while 3,780 lost their jobs after their companies closed.

More than 4,000 were blue-collar workers. The rest were either with banks and other companies that merged, with establishments that streamlined its office personnel or firms that closed shop.

The 2000 figure was 434 more than the 6,175 laid-off workers for the same period in 1999. DOLE records also showed that 5,501 were laid off in the first nine months of 1998.

Moreover, the DOLE records revealed that the increasing number of laid-off workers was caused either by the closure of firms or retrenchment programs.

At least 56 firms closed as of September 2000. The main reasons cited for the closure were income losses and a sharp drop in the demand of their products or services.

DOLE records showed that an average of 22 persons was laid off daily since January to October 2000. The job loss peaked in September with a record of 1,535.

As of July last year, Western Visayas posted a record of only 96,000 employed persons.

Benguet fails to meet high demand for silk

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—This province, one of the major silk-producing provinces in the Cordillera, failed to meet the high demand for silk in the local market due to lack of cocoon producers and mulberry plants here in the year 2000.

Paul Dacuso, Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI) officer-in-charge, said Benguet was supposed to produce an average of 30 kilograms of raw silk a month but farmers were able to produce only at least 80 kg of raw silk for the year. The local market needs 300 kg of silk a year to supply the need of at least one weaver, Dacuso said.

The PTRI supplies the weavers of Panay Island, Cagayan de Oro and Palawan with raw silk produced by farmers.

Dacuso said the potentials of the sericulture industry here were not being fully realized because there were not enough mulberry plants in the mountains. Aside from the steep terrain that affects production, farmers have slowly turned away from planting and maintaining mulberry plants, he said.

Mulberry (*Muros alba*) is the staple food of silkworms. Dacuso said the drop in silk production is "very disappointing" since the Cordillera produces a higher quality of silk from the bivoltine temperate variety silkworm (which comes from cool regions abroad) compared to the quality of silk produced in the lowlands.

"We have experienced a shortfall in our egg dispersal to cocoon producers this year because they don't have enough mulberry plants to feed the worms," Dacuso said.

He said a farmer must have 1,000 kg of mulberry leaves to feed a box of the bivoltine temperate variety silkworm (one box, worth P120, contains 20,000 eggs). Farmers then must have 10,000 to 12,000 mulberry plants a hectare to properly meet the needs of the worms, he said.

But Dacuso said the farmers are only producing 6,000-7,000 plants per hectare.

"The fields are not fully maximized and as a result, less silk is being generated," he said. A cocoon, he said, could produce 1,000 to 1,200 meters of raw silk.

Dacuso said they are sad that the PTRI, designated to produce hybrid eggs and maintain pure lines of Japanese and Chinese breeds of worms for commercial purposes, cannot open the local silk market for export since the silk produced in the country cannot meet the demand of foreigners.

The foreign market seeks five to 10 tons of raw silk a month.

Dacuso said this could be readily supplied if there were enough cocoon producers in the country.

Dr. Carlos Tomboc, PTRI national director, has recently proposed an integrated system to mitigate the growing problem of silk production in the region.

Under the proposal, the PTRI would look for farmers who can develop model farms. ***Avigail Olarte, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

FIGHT FOR LAND

More 'lumads' turning rebels

BAGUIO CITY—A top official of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) said more indigenous peoples, especially in Mindanao, are being recruited by rebel groups like the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front because of the government's inability to implement the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (Ipra).

"The recruiters' come-on to the *lumads* (any of the non-Muslim indigenous peoples groups in Mindanao) is for them to throw away the Ipra because the government is not sincere in implementing it," claimed NCIP Chair David Daoas.

The *lumads* could not even enter the land that was given to them because of the non-implementation of Ipra, he said.

He pointed out, however, that a Supreme Court ruling that the Ipra is unconstitutional would help bolster their cause.

The Supreme Court in a 7-7 *per curiam* (a decision of the whole court summing the effects of the conflicting decision) resolution on Dec. 6 dismissed the petition filed by former Justice Isagani Cruz that questioned Ipra's constitutionality.

As a result of the petition and the non-issuance of the NCIP budget, the plight of the indigenous peoples was forgotten, Daoas said.

More than 200 *lumads* joined the MILF or formed their own armies because of the non-implementation of the Ipra, he revealed.

He said this was the reason the National Peace Commission, then headed by Haydee Yorac, called for the junking of the anti-Ipra petition.

"The plight of the *lumads* was similar to the plight of the Cordillera people then. Because of the Chico Dam project and Cellophil (the Cellophil Resource Corp. in Abra which threatened to denude the forests in central Cordillera), many of our people took up arms and joined the NPA," Daoas said. 'They have lost their land and had to regain it."

Daoas also cited the recent case of the Manobos in Bukidnon. He said 10 years ago, the government granted the Manobos 2,000 hectares of their ancestral land.

"Until now, they can not even enter the land that was theirs. Every time they did, they were met with guns," Daoas said.

He said they would try to resolve the case during the holidays.

"It took the country a hundred years to muster the political maturity to enact a law (like) the Ipra to correct the historical injustices done to the indigenous peoples. Let's give it a chance," Daoas said.

Crucial to the Supreme Court ruling is the Cariño Doctrine that cited the decision of the US Supreme Court at the turn of the century in the case, Mateo Cariño vs the Insular Government. The ruling recognized the "native title" or the customary ownership of land by the Igorots. ***Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Judge revokes massacre suspect's probation

BY CARLA GOMEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A regional trial court judge in Silay City has revoked the probation granted to Bemon Gallo, the main suspect in the Rivilla massacre, for a previous conviction of theft and illegal possession of a firearm.

In an order dated Dec. 29, Judge Reynaldo Alon said Gallo should continue serving the remainder of his suspended seven-year sentence for violating four conditions of his probation.

These violations were changing his place of residence without the prior approval of his supervising probation and parole officer and of the court; traveling outside the jurisdiction of his parole without permit; committing an offense; and possession of a firearm.

With the revocation of his probation, Gallo will have to continue serving his sentence until year 2005.

Gallo was meted out a seven-year jail term after Alon found him guilty of theft and illegal possession of firearm on Dec. 1, 1998. He was granted probation in August 1999 being a first offender.

Gallo is now in the custody of the police. He was arrested on Thursday, 11 days after the slaying of six members of the Rivilla family and their two housemaids on Dec. 17 inside the Rivilla home on 24th Aguinaldo Street this city.

Gallo is a residence of Purok Swimming Pool, Barangay Mambulac in Silay, 14 kilometers north of here. He went to Bacolod and started working as a houseboy for the Rivilla family in July without informing his probation officer.

He is now facing eight counts of murder and robbery for the killings.

The Bacolod City Prosecutor's Office has elevated the murder charges against Gallo before the regional trial court while it is assessing the separate robbery case.

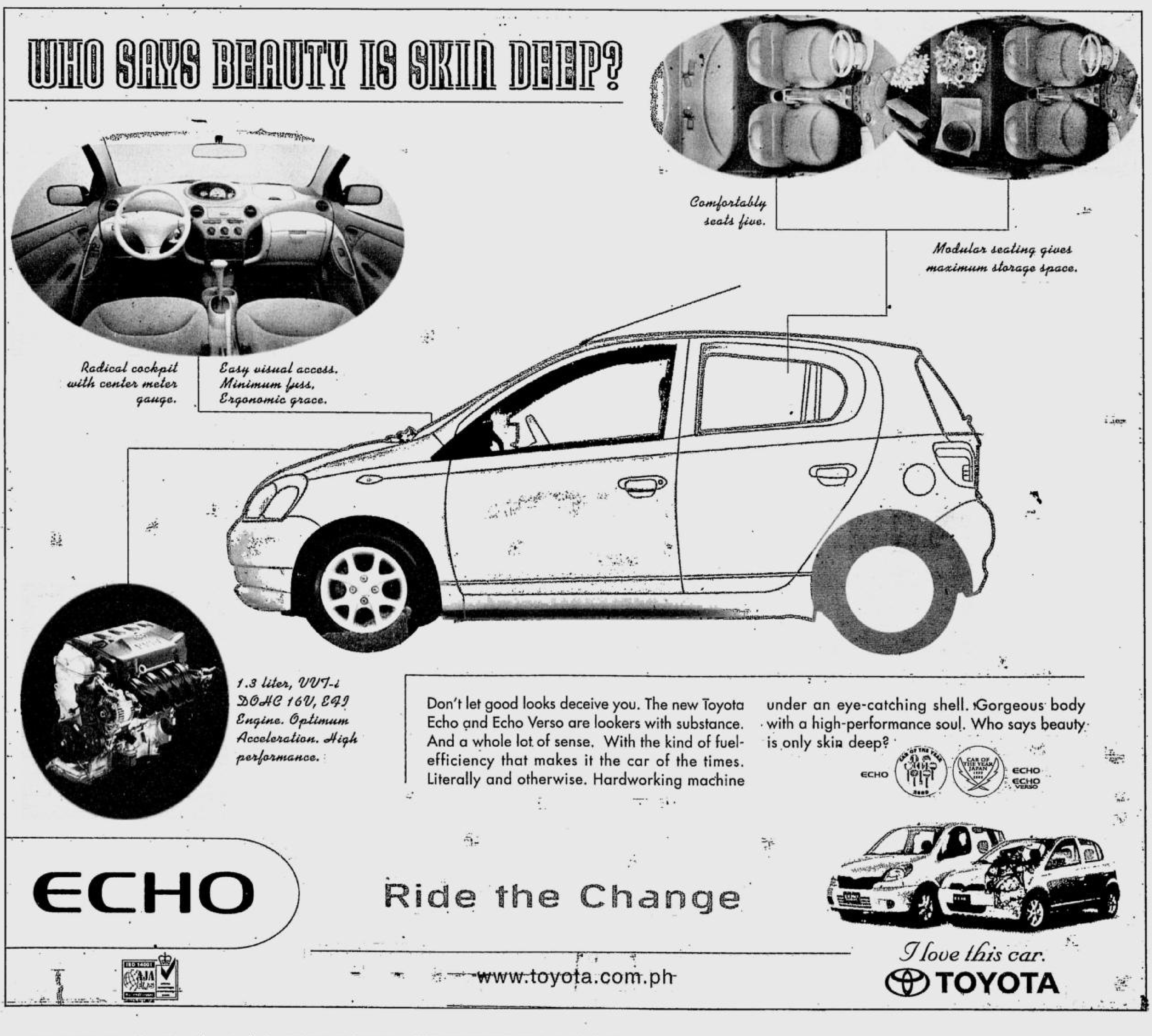
Gallo had admitted to police that he killed Carlos Rivilla Jr., 76; his wife Florinda, 75; son Benrico, 42; grandsons Mark Anthony, 13, Guillermo Benrico Jr., 11, and John Michael, 9; and housemaids Doloris Ogatis, 20, and Ritchel Gonzales, 19.

Police investigators believed that motive in the killing was revenge after Benrico beat up Gallo. The commission of the robbery was just an "afterthought," investigators said.

Gallo was allegedly angry with Benrico because Benrico allegedly often hurt Gallo, the last time was when Benrico hit Gallo with a bottle at about 2 a.m. on the day the Rivillas were killed.

Gallo was identified as the assailant by Rudy Alfonso, the Rivilla family driver, who said that when he reported for work Dec. 17, Gallo opened the gate for him and hacked him with a scythe in the neck and back.

Alfonso was able to grab the scythe from Gallo, sought the help of the Rivilla neighbor's security guard and reported the attack to the police.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INQUIRER Northern Luzon
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Balweg: Beyond the symbol and myth

By Vincent Cabreza
Baguio City

FORMER rebel priest Conrado Balweg, also known as Ka Ambo.

FILE PHOTO

POLITICAL critics always describe the myth surrounding slain rebel leader Conrado Balweg as "fabricated," particularly at the height of his popularity when he negotiated the first peace settlement with then President Corazon Aquino following the 1986 Edsa People Power revolt.

Balweg, a Tingguian, was one of four Roman Catholic priests who joined the communist New People's Army in early 1980 against the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, before breaking away to form "a militia of Igorots to assert their right to self-determination."

That story, and many more battles later, were often relayed to both national and international media by Balweg's alleged "creator," the Cordillera News Agency (CNA), a Baguio-based news outfit formed to witness the birth of the Cordillera Administrative Region.

But the CNA never dignified the catcalls about the supposed Balweg myth.

New meaning

In fact, the same CNA journalists credited for pushing Balweg into the limelight, have found new meaning in his crusade a year since his assassination at his ancestral home in Malibcong, Abra, on Dec. 31, 1999.

Balweg's brother Jovencio, leader of an NPA unit operating in Abra, owned responsibility for the murder on orders from top communist rebels in the region.

But the police closed Balweg's murder case late last year after the government began prosecuting Aglipayan church worker Lorna Rivera Baba and 13 others for the crime, based on a profile drawn up by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

Former journalist Jose Nicolas Ilagan said Balweg's ultimate legacy now appears to be his role in providing indigenous peoples rights an international voice.

Ilagan, a director of the Cordillera Executive Board, said this was a contribution, which Balweg rarely discussed, fearing that it would drown out his singular crusade for genuine Cordillera autonomy.

Balweg led the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA) against the government between 1984 and 1986, until he was tapped for talks by Ms Aquino's revolutionary government, according to reports documenting this point in history.

Not recorded were details about the role the CNA played in facilitating these talks.

Ilagan, then executive editor of the defunct Baguio newspaper Gold Ore, and fellow CNA founders Baboo Mondoñedo and Laida Lim-Perez acted as unofficial "go-betweens" for the Aquino administration, said journalist Domecio Cimatu, Ilagan's associate.

Their talks at Mount Data in Mt. Province drew up the 1987 peace agreement and helped spawn Executive Order 220 in 1987 that created the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Disarming profile

Ilagan said the CNA was a strategic institution at the time.

"The rest was all Balweg. The CNA never asked him to pose in a pin-up for indigenous peoples rights for the international media," said Cimatu.

A black-and-white portrait of deeply tanned, fine-featured Balweg, carrying a charming and unassuming smirk, first introduced him and his aspirations for an "Igorot nation" to the international media in 1986.

FROM BULLETS TO BALLOTS: Balweg is proclaimed by then presidential candidate Joseph Estrada as candidate of the Laban ng Makabayang Masang Pilipino in the 1998 congressional race in Abra. The former rebel leader lost the electoral battle.

FILE PHOTO

Artist Art Tibaldo, the youngest member to join the CNA in the 1990s, said he never knew the photographer who caught Balweg in such a disarming profile.

Tibaldo said that portrait helped the international media come to terms with Balweg's message about the nobility of the Cordillerans.

That photograph accompanied CNA stories that inadvertently painted the rebel leader with unusual anecdotes about his crusade.

The same photo accompanied a 1988 report about an ambush attempt on Balweg in Abra, which was published by the defunct Manila Chronicle.

The ambush was criticized by left-wing organizations as a "setup" to reinforce Balweg's revolutionary agenda.

Cimatu said the Left actually idolizes slain Kalinga chieftain Macliing Dulag as the real voice for Cordillera autonomy.

Balweg was Ms Aquino's Cordillera "hero."

The CNA stories structured this sequence of events for a 1990 biographic film on Balweg's life, which portrayed him as an Igorot Robin Hood played by actor Phillip Salvador.

Balweg was actually diminutive, no taller than 5 feet 3 inches.

But Ilagan said the scale of Balweg's "growth" invited more people around the world to test the conditions of the indigenous peoples in their countries, years before the United Nations would be presented with a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.

"It was important that Ambo (Balweg's nickname) become a symbol. But that was not manufactured. The CNA was never there to create a myth," Ilagan said.

The CNA was "evolved" between 1982 and 1984 as the alternative media for Cordillera peoples' rights, he said.

Building bridges

It was about that time when Balweg, together with fellow Abra priests Bruno Ortega, Cirilo Ortega and Nilo Valerio, asserted Cordillera autonomy when they fought Cellophil Resources Corp. in Abra.

Ilagan said Mondoñedo and Perez wanted to "build bridges between the Cordillera and the rest of the world."

"The (Igorots) were farmed out to Region 1 (Ilocos) and Region 2 (Cagayan Valley), and they were always poor, always on the sidelines of Imperial Manila, always fighting for the few alms Manila can (throw their way). The CNA was formed to help change all these by showing the world the realities of (being Igorot) in the Philippines at that time," he explained.

Among these realities are Balweg's "failures." The loss of the first autonomy law during a 1990 plebiscite was the first failure attributed to Balweg, although the former priest himself campaigned against the 1990 organic act for Cordillera autonomy.

"Cordillera leaders campaigned against autonomy in 1990 when Congress approved the first organic act for regional autonomy. These leaders were reacting against Ms Aquino. This was still part of the Solid North and they were mostly pro-Marcos people," Cimatu said.

Balweg only supported the second organic act, passed for ratification in 1997, only to see it also defeated.

He had already borrowed the tribal concept called *bodong* as his personal philosophy for national peace in 1990, when his association with the CNA became even more "concrete."

Igorot contribution

In Balweg's worldview, *bodong* or a multilateral peace pact with other tribes was the most civilized contribution of the Igorots to the Philippines.

This matched the agenda being pushed by the CNA, making the kinship a matter of "like minds complementing each other," Ilagan explained.

But Cimatu said this insight did not play well when the CNA reviewed Balweg's contributions following his murder.

He summed up his personal conclusion in two words: "Get real."

"First of all, when he was murdered, his aspirations virtually died with him because what Balweg never got to resolving was the inherent fragmentation of the Igorot cultures. Even when he was alive, many Cordillerans considered him a mere Tingguian. Fourteen years after the Cordillera was created, we have Kalingas killing each other, so what did he really achieve?" Cimatu said.

"In fact, right after his death, President Estrada killed the CAR when he issued Executive Order 270 terminating the governing bodies of this region."

Balweg ran and lost the congressional race in Abra in 1998 under Mr. Estrada's party, the Laban ng Makabayang Masang Pilipino.

Cimatu said Balweg relied on this friendship until his murder, hoping to make new progress in the drive toward Cordillera autonomy.

"Second, the government is actually sustaining whatever fake legend (which is being created using) Balweg. Not the CNA. It is government. His murder trial is now being conducted and they have the wrong people. If you wanted justice, you would get Jovencio. But government did not have Jovencio, so they used scapegoats. So it is perpetuating another Balweg myth that will not benefit even his own family," he said.

RP coffee industry wide awake on 'barako' potential

By Frank Cimatu
Baguio City

LOCAL coffee growers wish you a "black" New Year amid the sad state of coffee production in the country. Fr. Roger Bag-ao, chair of the Coffee Foundation of the Philippines, said he even forces the 1,000-plus members of his Cavite-based cooperative, the Samahang Magsasaka ng Sambayanang Kristiyano, to buy a kilo of roasted coffee beans every month.

"*Meron yung mga naaadik ng kape at bumibili ng dalawang kilo kada buwan* (There are those who get addicted to coffee and buy two kilos every month)," Bag-ao said.

He said such aggressive marketing was needed to save the local coffee industry that is now so weak you can see the bottom of your cup.

The current world market price for coffee beans is at its 30-year low and coffee farmers abroad are even cutting their coffee trees because these are no longer profitable. The local price of green coffee (fresh beans) is now P30 a kilo, down from almost P100 a kilo in 1994.

Coffee experts who attended the 1st National Coffee Congress in Baguio last month are one in saying the country's hope is in the *barako* variety.

Oversupply

Emmanuel Torrejon, chair of the Specialty Coffee Association, said what dampened the coffee price internationally is the oversupply of the Robusta variety. Overproduction of cheap Robusta beans, particularly in Vietnam, made prices scrape the $600 (P30,000) per metric ton level, he said.

Torrejon said coffee growers should concentrate on growing world-class Arabica coffee.

"The Benguet Arabica which is mainly of the heirloom Typica variety being sought after by gourmet buyers all over the world, is mainly taken for granted and not fully developed as a main Arabica supply base," he said.

He said the image of the Philippines is that of a Robusta producer and this image is even associated with the inferior variety of the coffee beans.

"We have the potential to be known for good quality Arabica from this region (Cordillera)," he said.

"Good quality Benguet Arabica (that is) properly processed can come up with a cup of good liquor quality as attested by some cuppers given samples of Benguet Arabica. With the elevation of Benguet at 4,000 to 5,000 feet, we can produce high-quality Arabica of good flavor and acidity normally characteristic of high grown coffee," he said.

He said beans grown in this elevation mature more slowly and produce what is known as "hard beans."

Small production

Unfortunately, according to Rafael Rene Espino, Department of Agriculture director for high value commercial crops, Cordillera produces only 3 percent of all coffee in the country.

Of the 115,000 MT of coffee produced last year, 34 percent came from Southern Mindanao. Most of the produce was of the Robusta variety, which is used for instant coffee and other processed beverage like soft drinks.

Espino said the country imports coffee of the Liberica and Excelsa varieties as fillers for the instant coffee that Filipinos love to drink (about 95 percent of all coffee drank in the country was of the instant variety).

He said lowland coffee growers could grow Liberica, which is highly sought by Middle Eastern drinkers.

"We can't compete with Brazil and Colombia yet but we can export Arabica and other varieties to the United States, Korea and Taiwan," Espino said.

For coffee growers in the Cordillera, however, the problem is the lack of roads.

A coffee grower in Mt. Province said hundreds of hectares of coffee plantations there were abandoned because of bad roads.

Another coffee grower in Kalinga said most farmers rationalized that instead of carrying a cavan of coffee and getting only about P35 a kilo, they would rather carry a sack of marijuana and make more money.

Dave Santos of Nestlé Philippines which has set 11 coffee buying stations all over the country said they discuss the road problem with local governments and push for the building of roads to help coffee growers.

He said they had been successful in Aurora, Bulacan and Bicol.

Twelve years ago, according to Bag-ao, the Philippines used to export coffee worth $150 million (P7.5 billion) but in 1999, the country's exports went down to $1.3 million (P65 million).

Still profitable

Bag-ao also said growing coffee even at this bleak time was still profitable because the local demand far outweighs the supply.

"Unlike Vietnam and Indonesia (the biggest coffee producer in Asia), Filipinos are coffee drinkers," he said.

He said current trends in coffee drinking showed that the industry is ripe for the picking.

Bag-ao said coffee shops in Manila increased by 400 percent in the past six years. He also said coffee farming in the country should be made more efficient.

Bag-ao said the country has the most unproductive coffee plantations in the world. Post-harvest facilities are also a must.

"Your coffee in Benguet may be one of the best but they look unattractive," he said.

Torrejon added that specialty coffee would increase demand for good Arabica in the next 10 years.

He also noticed that coffee drinkers are getting younger.

"These 15- to 21-year-old drinkers will be your biggest market in 15 years," Torrejon said.

Bigger chances

He said the way Filipino farmers cultivate coffee would boost the country's chances in the world market, citing that organically grown coffee (without chemical inputs) are highly sought in the market.

"We don't apply pesticides much because we lack the money. Fortunately, (demand for) organic coffee is on the rise. We were growing organic coffee but we don't know it yet," he said.

The agriculture department has set up coffee cluster farms in Parang, Sulu, and in Languyan, Tawi-Tawi to show that good quality coffee knows no insurgency conflicts.

"If we can do it in these parts, then we can do it anywhere," Espino said.

Come to think of it, instead of fighting, our Muslim brothers and government soldiers should just sit together and have a good cup of *barako*.

After all, *kaffeeklatsch*, the German word for dialogue, literally means coffee session.

PNP bomb probers zeroing in on MILF

(From page A1)

ing the bombings.

He cited one detail—that mass transport systems, shopping malls and other public places were the intended targets of the attacks.

He said the source was a businesswoman he knew personally.

Vizconde said on Monday that a witness was willing to disclose information she had on the bombings.

She claimed that a military general had plotted the attacks that killed 15 people and injured some 90 others, and that he had hired a team of convicts to execute the plan.

Director Edgar Aglipay, Metro Manila police chief, yesterday expressed interest in meeting the woman.

"I told Mr. Vizconde that I would arrange a meeting with his informant. I am willing to go to Mindanao and get her statement," Aglipay said.

"I also would like to compare her information with the physical evidence we have gathered so far," he added.

Aglipay said that if the meeting materialized, he planned to take with him Chief Supt. Robert Delfin, deputy chief for operations of the National Capital Regional Police Office, and a select group of investigators.

Frightened

Vizconde said the general's wife had overheard her husband discussing a plot to bomb the metropolis three to four months ago.

He said the general's wife told a female friend what she had learned. It was this friend who contacted Vizconde's source three or four days before the bombings took place.

Vizconde said his source was so frightened that she went to Mindanao with her family to avoid the bombings.

He said she called him at his house in Parañaque City at around 1 p.m. Sunday afternoon from Davao City, and told him what she knew.

Vizconde said his source would come forward at the proper time and place to tell her story.

He said the source had proposed that she testify before an independent investigation body because she did not trust the military or the police.

He also said he had been bombarded with phone calls since Monday regarding the identity of his source.

Among the callers, he said, were Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim and a number of military officials.

After offering a P1-million reward for information leading to the mastermind of the bombings, Lim yesterday also offered court "immunity" to the bombers' accomplices should they decide to betray their leaders.

Lim said in a statement that the money reward, along with security privileges, "is open to everybody, including members of the group involved in the bombing."

Would-be informants are asked to call these numbers: 925-0320 to 30; 925-9111, 927-4112 or 928-1814.

Ideal

VACC chair and president Dante Jimenez said the group would ask the Department of Justice to instruct the Bureau of Corrections to make a head count of all convicts in the seven penal institutions nationwide in order to test the veracity of the woman's claim.

"The use of convicts is ideal because only hard-core criminals can and are willing to commit such monstrous things like these bombings," Jimenez said.

"They can be easily tempted with pardons or paroles or commutations, or even financial assistance for their families," he said.

Jimenez said the VACC asked the Western Police District for "security assistance" after its office in Ermita, Manila, received a bomb threat yesterday afternoon.

He said the call was received by telephone operator Jun Casindad at around 6:30 p.m., less than an hour after Vizconde's revelation was aired on television.

Nonpolitical

Finance Secretary Jose Pardo sought to dispel speculations that the bombings were politically motivated.

"No politician would do such a thing," he said. He also denied that Mr. Estrada would use the bombings to declare martial law and stall the impeachment trial.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon dismissed talks of a declaration of martial law, saying this was "improbable" without the support of Congress and the acquiescence of the Supreme Court.

But even if martial law were declared, Biazon said, the President's impeachment trial would go on.

"Under the Constitution, even under martial law, Congress will continue to function. Martial law or no martial law, the impeachment proceedings will be concluded to its logical end," he said.

Biazon, who chairs the Senate committee on national defense and security, also expressed disbelief that the military as an organization could be behind the bombings.

But he called for an investigation into the claim of Vizconde's source.

"That statement from Vizconde should be resolved, looked into, because if it is true, then some prosecution is in order. Some heads must roll," he said at a press conference.

Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad, however, said the claim aired by Vizconde was "too shallow."

He said it was the Estrada administration that was actually hurt by the bombings.

"So why will the administration be looking for more problems?" Tatad said.

Acceptable

Biazon said that for an investigation into the bombings to be acceptable and credible, it must involve a multi-sectoral task group including the "anti-terrorist" experts supposedly offered by the United States.

The US Embassy has since denied making such an offer. (*See story on Page A1.*)

Biazon said the task group could be composed of the police, military intelligence agencies, the National Bureau of Investigation and nongovernmental organizations like the VACC.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines urged the government to ensure "swift justice" for those who died in the bombings.

"We ask that swift justice be rendered for the victims of the bombings because of the heinousness with which they were killed. We pray that there will be no cover-up," said Msgr. Hernando Coronel, CBCP media director, in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Coronel said persons with information on the bombings should come forward so the perpetrators could be brought to justice.

He particularly encouraged Vizconde's informant to tell her story.

Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin has ordered that all Masses in the archdiocese of Manila on Jan. 1-9 be said in remembrance of those who were killed in the five bombing attacks.

The cardinal said the Masses would also be offered "for the conversion of the perpetrators of the crime, so that their hearts may be pricked and the spirit of repentance come upon them."

Pro-Estrada

Rev. Fr. Jose Dizon, executive director of Kairos Philippines, said the organization believed in the claim of Vizconde's source that pro-Estrada members of the military were behind the attacks.

"Military personnel who are supportive of President Estrada are the ones behind the bombings to deflect public outrage from the President," Dizon told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

"We believe that pro-Estrada people are behind the bombings, and it is the military that is in a position to conduct such terrorist attacks," he said.

Kairos, a Catholic missionary and pastoral program for evangelization, has several bishops in its Council of Elders. Its membership includes priests, nuns and other Catholic religious leaders.

In Davao City, Bishop Felixberto Calang of the Philippine Independent Church, a convenor of the Estrada Resign Movement, said a "wag the dog" scenario may have been behind the bombings.

"When Mr. Estrada declared the war against the MILF in March, many thought of the 'wag the dog' scenario. True enough, after the escalation of the armed conflict in Central Mindanao, the protests subsided, until the 'Juetengate' scandal surfaced in October," Calang said.

A group of Metro Manila-based Muslim young professionals expressed exasperation that some government officials were again using Muslims as "convenient scapegoats" for the bombings.

The Bangsamoro Young Professionals also expressed fears that Muslim communities may again be put under surveillance, and Muslims cast as suspects without concrete evidence.

"We fear that any Muslim civilian or Muslim foreigner may be arbitrarily picked up for questioning. We fear that veiled Muslim women may be harassed for inspection purposes," the group said.

"This is discrimination based on religion," it added. *With reports from Clarissa Batino, Agnes E. Donato, Juliet L. Javellana, Volt Contreras, Norman Bordadora and Stella O. Gonzales in Manila; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Senators unfazed by bombings

SENATORS yesterday rejected extra security, saying the spate of bombings in Metro Manila on Saturday would have no effect on President Estrada's impeachment trial.

"These bombings are scaring the nation but we are used to these and we will do our duty," Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said shortly before the trial resumed after a 10-day holiday recess.

"Security will be as usual. We don't want to honor these terrorists by reacting with panic."

The attacks aggravated an already tense political atmosphere and prompted the military to deploy Marines in Metro Manila.

AP

Ernie: Erap lacks the brains to plot bombings

(From page A1)

Maceda, in the course of maintaining that Mr. Estrada was not in any way involved in the five bomb attacks.

In an interview over dzBB, Maceda said the government was not entirely dismissing the possibility that "government men" could have had a hand in the bombings.

"Maybe they are part of it. You cannot rule out anybody," he said when asked whether government investigators were not ruling out the involvement of government men.

But Maceda also pointed out that newspaper columnist Alex Magno was right in his observation that Mr Estrada did not have the intellectual capacity to order the bombings.

"I don't think the President has the intellectual competence to go into an adventurous act like this," he quoted Magno as saying.

He also noted that even Magno concluded that "maybe the generals were involved, not the President."

But Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, the President's son by ex-starlet Guia Gomez, said Magno's theory could not be true because his father was in control of the military and police.

Ejercito also said it was not possible that military or police officials could have staged the bombings without his father's knowledge, just as the assassination of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. was pulled off without then President Ferdinand Marcos knowing anything about it.

"President Estrada is not Mr. Marcos. Besides, President Estrada is not sick," Ejercito declared, alluding to the fact that Aquino was murdered at a time when the late strongman was gravely ill.

Vizconde

Still on the subject of mental capacity, Maceda said Lauro Vizconde of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption could not have been in his right mind when he quoted a Mindanao-based witness as saying that a military official had orchestrated the wave of bombings and used a group of convicts to carry it out.

"Firstly, that claim is not believable. Secondly, Vizconde is not a (criminal) expert," he said.

Maceda said Vizconde's personal tragedy—the violent killing of his wife and daughters inside the family home—could have affected his judgment.

"With due respect (to Vizconde), we all know how the murder of his wife and family hurt him so much. Maybe he continues to be affected by the tragedy," Maceda said.

US experts

Maceda also said US "anti-terrorist experts" might have already arrived in the country to help local investigators unmask the bombers.

He said the experts were likely agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation or of other US anti-terrorism units.

But the US Embassy in Manila yesterday denied that US bomb experts were on their way to assist local investigators.

Lonnie Kelly, acting spokesperson of the US Embassy, said that contrary to Maceda's earlier announcement, the US government had not offered to send its experts because there was no formal request of assistance from Malacañang or the Philippine National Police.

"There are no bomb experts. There is no request from the Philippines," Kelly said.

He added: "We will be very happy to assist, if ever, but we cannot send (anyone) on our own because the Philippines is a sovereign country. We don't want to be accused of intervening."

Maceda announced Monday that the US government had formally offered to send its experts here.

He said it was customary for the United States to send its counter-terrorism experts to countries where an act of terrorism had occurred. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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Cover-up try revealed by Ocampo

(From page A1)

second set of documents that would allow "Velarde" to transfer his rights over the P500-million trust agreement to Dichaves.

"So he (Go) told me to prepare a second set of investment management agreement (IMA) because the principal, I supposed, talked to him to assign his rights and interests over the investment management agreement to a certain Jaime Dichaves," Ocampo said on the 13th day of the trial.

Go resigned as bank chair on Dec. 19, stating he wanted to distance his bank from any suspicion that the institution was involved in corruption.

Go earlier resigned as treasurer from the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation, which allegedly received P200 million in "jueteng" payoffs.

Ocampo added that Chua came unannounced to her office in the first week of last month asking her to "protect" the President and to "do something" about the first set of documents which Mr. Estrada signed as Jose Velarde on Feb. 4 last year.

Chua's unannounced visit

She said Chua was the President's representative to the bank on the trust account and was present when the President signed the Jose Velarde documents in Malacañang.

"First week of December he came to my office unannounced. He asked me to protect the President," Ocampo said.

She said the instruction to prepare a new set of documents was one of the three reasons that prompted her to come out and testify that the President was Jose Velarde.

Ocampo said sorry in Mendoza's direction before she talked about the new documents.

"It was, I'm sorry, done in the office of Atty. Estelito Mendoza. So that really concerned me a lot . . . That's why on Dec. 13, I talked to the external counsel and I talked to the president of the bank about all of this," she said.

Ocampo said Go asked her to go to a fourth floor office in Dynavision at No. 108 Rada St. and to look for Dichaves.

"The guard told me that there is no Mr. Dichaves in that building," she said, but was told that her companions were already up.

She said that it turned out that the office was Mendoza's and that he was there together with Dichaves.

Ocampo said the signature cards, investment guidelines and directional letter were prepared and signed on Dec. 11 in her office on the 21st floor of Equitable PCI Bank Tower I in Makati City.

The IMA, she said, was signed on Dec. 13 in Mendoza's office.

Not implemented

Ocampo said that although Dichaves signed the new agreement, it was not implemented because the President as Jose Velarde did not write an authorization letter making Dichaves his assignee on the trust agreement.

"We have to get his signature in a directional letter but that never came. So how can we implement it?" Ocampo said.

She dropped her new bombshells in response to questions by Senator-judge Loren Legarda-Leviste and other senator-judges after the defense panel decided to waive its right to cross-examine her.

Asked by Legarda-Leviste what reasons prompted her to testify in the trial, Ocampo said there were three.

She said that when she saw the P142-million Jose Velarde check on the first day of the impeachment trial, she knew she would have to come out.

"So I thought, eventually I would come out because I can identify (the owner) but I have to wait for my time," she said.

Fear for life

The third reason, she said, was the instruction by Go to make a new set of documents.

But she said the biggest reason had to do with her fear for her life.

"I was concerned (because) Attorney Chua saw me sometime (on the) first week of December asking me about the documents and what we were doing about it," she said.

"So in other words, they remembered that I was there, I witnessed. And apparently, after reviewing all transactions in the bank (they saw) probably (there were) just two of us who actually saw the President sign as Jose Velarde," she said.

Ocampo, replying to Sen. Renato Cayetano, said she continued to fear for her life and the lives of her family especially after five synchronized bomb attacks killed 15 people and injured more than 100 in Metro Manila on Dec. 30.

"Yes, of course, . . . because this is the government, this is Malacañang. Especially after the bombings, I was really very concerned. I don't really know the source of the bombings. It's very difficult to be in hiding, it's very difficult to be in this situation. I am just telling the truth," Ocampo said.

Cayetano assured Ocampo that senators were praying for her.

Senate Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona Jr. asked if the Jose Velarde account was in existence in 1999 and Ocampo said yes.

Private prosecutor Mario Bautista had only one question when Ocampo was recalled to the witness stand after first testifying on Dec. 22.

Bautista asked what she did after the President signed the trust agreement in Malacañang on Feb. 4.

"I gathered all the documents and I went back to the bank and I typed Jose Velarde under his signature in the investment management agreement," she said.

No cross

Bautista offered her for cross-examination to the defense panel. There was silence for several seconds before Mendoza stood up.

"The defense panel will not cross-examine Mrs. Clarissa Ocampo. It maintains its position that her testimony is not covered by the Articles of Impeachment," Mendoza said.

Asked by senator-judges anew about the Feb. 4 signing, Ocampo said that she and the other witnesses could only stay quiet when they saw the President affix his signature, "Jose Velarde."

She said that aside from her and the President, his former Chief of Staff Aprodicio Laquian, Chua, bank lawyer Manuel Curato were seated in a big round table in Malacañang.

She said Laquian probably did not see the President sign as Jose Velarde because he pulled his chair about two and a half feet away from the President when he was signing the papers.

"We were just very quiet because we took our cue from the President. He was actually very quiet. I was explaining to him the nature of the documents he had to sign and we just proceeded with the signing," she said.

Though surprised, she said she could not do anything.

"What can I do?" Ocampo said. "Actually I waited for him to sign all the documents."

Ocampo said that when Mr. Estrada repeatedly signed Jose Velarde on the documents, she felt it was "consistent" with the bank requirement because all previously prepared documents pertaining to the trust account turned out to be in that name.

She said that when they left Malacañang, she asked Curato if the transaction would be valid.

Can we proceed?

"I asked him, 'This is Jose Velarde'? Can we proceed? And he agreed," Ocampo said.

Ocampo said Chua told her an hour before the signing that the President did not want to sign too many documents.

She said she decided which documents were relevant to the trust agreement and which needed the President's signature.

The signature card was the major document which the President signed.

Asked by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile why she did not immediately authenticate the Jose Velarde signature, she said, "because that is not his real name."

Ocampo said it was only an hour before the signing when she learned that the client Jose Velarde was the President. She said she was assuming she would meet the President but never thought he was "Velarde."

"Attorney Chua, contact person for the transaction and the representative of the principal, mentioned that the signing would be made in Malacañang but he never mentioned whom I would be meeting. I only found out one hour before (the signing) that it was the President in Malacañang," she said.

Ocampo said that after the President signed the signature card, she typed the name Jose Velarde under the signatures.

When Mendoza announced there would be no cross-examination, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. asked for a caucus to decide whether to give the senator-judges more time to ask Ocampo questions.

After almost an hour, Pimentel announced that all senator-judges would be given five minutes each to ask Ocampo because there was no cross-examination.

But Sen. Raul Roco quickly asserted that the five minutes for all senator-judges was being allowed not because there was no cross-examination but because of the importance of Ocampo's testimony.

Roco stressed that they would be creating a "terrible situation" where the burden of cross-examining witnesses would be shifted to the senator-judges.

Curato

Equitable PCI Bank lawyer Manuel Curato corroborated Ocampo's testimony that Chua was present when the President signed Jose Velarde on bank documents on Feb. 4, 2000 in Malacañang.

Curato testified that he along with Ocampo went to Malacañang where he saw the President, Laquian and Chua.

Chua, according to Curato, was the one who requested the President to sign some of the documents.

It was during that noontime Malacañang visit that Mr. Estrada signed his name as Jose Velarde on several bank documents like the authority to debit P500 million from another account and three copies of signature cards.

Curato, head of the bank's legal division, said he was seated beside Ocampo and had observed the entire proceedings.

Curato's testimony lasted for only 20 minutes. *With a report from Martin P. Marfil*

Prosecution has burden of proof

(From page A1)

vice president of Equitable PCIBank, had testified that she saw the President signing the P500-million investment management agreement with the bank using a false name, prosecutors should prove that the money was acquired through false means.

This was necessary so Ocampo's testimony would not be struck from the record, Davide ruled.

Prosecutors told the Senate tribunal that Ocampo's testimony showed Estrada hid assets 14 times what he declared in his 1999 income tax returns.

This proved he was corrupt, they said.

In its motion for clarification, the prosecution, citing Republic Act 1379, said that assets acquired by any public official manifestly out of proportion to his salary and other income were presumed "prima facie" to have been unlawfully acquired.

With this argument, the prosecution had hoped that the burden of proving that the P500 million was not ill-gotten lay on the defense.

Davide yesterday rejected the argument.

"The belated reliance by the prosecution on section 2 of RA 1379, which was initially pointed out by Senator-Judge Drilon and not by the prosecution, is patently premature at this stage of the trial," Davide said in open court.

"Note that the prima facie presumption that the property is unlawfully acquired arises only upon proof that the public officer or employee has acquired during his incumbency an amount of property which is manifestly out of proportion to his salary, his other lawful income and his income from legitimately acquired property.

"How can anyone then claim, unless of course he has already prejudged the case on the matter in issue, that the presumption in section 2 in RA 1379 has been established?" he said.

Davide pointed out that Ocampo had not finished her testimony.

He also noted that the prosecution was only starting to prove the "basis for the presumption."

"No one may insist at this stage of the trial, at this stage of the trial, I emphasize, in connection with the unfinished testimony of Clarissa Ocampo that the burden of proof and the burden of evidence have been shifted to the defense. The motion for clarification is therefore denied for lack of merit," Davide said.

Three witnesses

But instead of being downhearted, a member of the prosecution team said that they welcomed the ruling as it clarified a question that had been nagging them since Dec. 22.

Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo admitted that Davide's ruling would be additional work for the prosecution.

He earlier told the court that the prosecution would present three witnesses to prove that the P500 million was ill-gotten.

Arroyo yesterday told the court that he had disclosed the names of the witnesses to Senate President Aquilino Pimentel the other day.

Pimentel affirmed that Arroyo indeed revealed the names to him.

The question of whether the prosecution or defense panel had the burden of proof in proving that the P500 million was ill-gotten cropped up on Dec. 22 after Ocampo testified that Mr. Estrada had affixed his signature Jose Velarde on several bank documents.

The signature caused the transfer of P500 million from a P1.2-billion savings account with the Equitable PCIBank.

The prosecution said the money belonged to the President. *With a report from AFP*

Defense lawyer placed on defensive

(From page A1)

ing that "insinuations and speculations" arising from Clarissa Ocampo's testimony may affect his "honor, dignity and standing in the (legal) profession."

Ocampo, a senior vice president of Equitable PCIBank, continued her testimony yesterday.

She said she was one foot away when the President signed Jose Velarde on bank documents for an investment management agreement for a P500-million loan to the Wellex Group, a company owned by William Gatchalian.

According to Mendoza, Go showed up in his office in the morning of Dec. 13 without an appointment.

The INQUIRER learned that the "companion" was Ramon Ang, vice chair of San Miguel Corp. who's known to be close to SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco.

"Not too long after, Jaime Dichaves came with another companion," he said.

Dichaves had told the impeachment court that he issued the P142-million check that allegedly funded the purchase of the Boracay mansion and that he owned a controversial Equitable PCI Bank account.

In a letter to the Senate dated Dec. 18, lawyer Manuel Lazaro told the court that his client, Dichaves, was the owner of Equitable PCI Bank Account No. 000110-254950-4 and that Dichaves was also the one who issued Check No. 011-714951.

Mendoza said that after he, Go and Dichaves finished their conversation about the first set of documents that was submitted to the impeachment court by Equitable PCI Bank the day before, Go and Dichaves asked him if they could use his room for another meeting.

"Since I was working at the conference room, I told them they may use my office which is adjacent to the conference room," he said.

Mendoza said he even met Ocampo at the hall outside his office where they exchanged "small talk."

He said Ocampo introduced herself to him while telling him that she was his daughter Susan's best friend in elementary at St. Scholastica's College.

Threatening calls

Ocampo, who was still on the witness stand, could only nod and smile approvingly to Mendoza's claim.

Mendoza also told the court that he and his family had been "receiving many threatening calls" for him to withdraw as one of Mr. Estrada's lawyers in the impeachment trial.

He cited false reports that came out a day before Christmas, which said that he had been rushed to the St. Luke's Hospital after suffering a stroke.

Mendoza likewise chided Quezon City Rep. Michael Defensor who earlier called on him to "withdraw from the case for breach of code of professional conduct."

"If the President will allow, I am prepared to withdraw from this case," he said.

But Mendoza was nevertheless quick to add that in no way was he going to withdraw "on the basis of insinuations and speculations."

House Prosecutor Joker Arroyo countered that "while the prosecution laments that a colleague has been accused of professional misconduct," he questioned the value of Mendoza's statement because this was not made under oath and Mendoza was not cross-examined.

"What is the value (of Mendoza's statement)? It is not evidence, it is not a testimony," Arroyo said.

The militant Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU)said Mendoza should be made to reveal all that he knew about the transactions.

"No wonder the defense did not want to cross-examine Ms Clarissa Ocampo, what with its lead counsel indirectly involved in the signing of the fraudulent documents. Mendoza has been probably dreading the moment Ocampo will reveal that some of the documents were signed in his very office," said KMU chair Crispin Beltran.

Peso hits all-time low of ₱52 to $1

(From page A1)

The peso weakened to a record 52 to the US dollar early Tuesday but later closed at 51 at the Philippine Dealing System.

On the first trading day of the year, the 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index shed 46.01 points to 1,446.49, its biggest single-day drop in seven months.

"The currency and stocks are obvious casualties of the bombings," said Luz Lorenzo, research head of ATR-Kim Eng Securities Inc.

"If more bombs go off, then people will just continue to exit. And if there are no other incidents, the market will just react to the impeachment trial of President Estrada," added Louie Bate, managing director for stock trading at ING Baring Securities Philippines Inc.

But Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the peso's downturn was "just an emotional overreaction" and "the usual knee-jerk reaction of the people."

Buenaventura admitted the country would continue paying "an extra premium" for the political uncertainty, but he voiced optimism the peso would recover to 47 to the dollar once the impeachment trial is over.

Currency traders said banks were buying dollars early Tuesday on expectation of further peso losses triggered by the specter of further bomb attacks and political instability.

Total transactions at the Philippine Dealing System reached $84 million. The peso closed at 50.01 to the dollar on Dec. 29, the last trading day of the previous year.

On Oct. 31, the peso fell to its then record low of 51.95 to the dollar after 12 big business groups called on the President to resign in the wake of the "Juetengate" scandal.

Landscape change

"The bombings changed the landscape both literally and figuratively," said Gonzalo Bongolan, research head of PCCI Securities.

"It reminded us there is still a violent side (to the political crisis). The rumors are that the bombings are a prelude to something more dramatic," Bongolan added, citing speculation the current administration might have had a hand in the bombings that killed 15 people and wounded scores of others.

President Estrada earlier denied rumors that his administration was behind the bombings in a bid to force a state of emergency and halt the impeachment trial.

No one has claimed responsibility for the bombings, triggering a crossfire of accusations against Moro and communist guerrillas, police and military factions, and the government and opposition.

But foreign exchange traders said the peso was likely to stay under pressure in the near term.

Steve Brice, treasury economist with Standard Chartered Bank, held out hope the local currency would recover in the second half of 2001.

Traders said the movement of the peso as well as the stock market was closely tied to the expected outcome of the impeachment trial.

Rally or slide

"If the prosecution scores some points, expect the market to stage a rally. But if the defense scores the points, expect it to fall," said Hazel de la Cruz, research head of Orion Squire Capital Inc.

Efren Cruz, president of Mutual Fund Management Co. of the Philippines, agreed that the market's direction, probably for most of the first quarter, clearly hinged on the impeachment process.

"If there are no more bombshells, the market is likely to trade sideways or lower in the near term," Cruz said.

"Technically, there is some tentative support (for the main index) at 1,450 points but if there is further negative news it will fall through 1,400 points to 1,380," Cruz said.

Bongolan said the main index was likely to trade in a range between 1,435 and 1,470 points in the next few days with further damaging testimony against Mr. Estrada likely to provide it with some slight upside.

But Rolando Pineda of First Orient Securities said he expected the index to breach the 1,400 support level and test the next major support of 1,380.

Market turnover on Tuesday was light at P380 million as the bombings spooked investors who decided to wait and see what happens in the impeachment trial as well.

Among the most heavily sold down stocks yesterday were Ayala Land Inc., SM Prime Holdings Inc. and Meralco B.

ALI and SMPH, both mall operators, dropped by 20 centavos and 30 centavos to close at P5.20 and P5.50. Meralco B, on the other hand, dropped by P3 to close at P46.50. *With reports from AP, AFP and Reuters*

Mendoza, Dichaves may have to testify

(From page A1)

be done to Ocampo. They questioned her intensely.

The senators perceived to be sympathetic to the President tried to show that the documents on the Velarde account cannot be admitted as evidence because they did not comply with certain requirements, such as lack of notarization and incomplete number of signed copies.

In the same breath, some of the senators who have made no secret of their dislike for the President posed questions on Ocampo that were aimed at strengthening the credibility of her testimony.

Like the testimony of Emma Lim, the questions of the senators enabled Ocampo to add details that put holes in the President's earlier statement that he had nothing to do with the Velarde account.

The questions also opened the door for the disclosure of more damaging information about the alleged efforts of the President's personal lawyer, Fernando Chua, and close friend, Jaime Dichaves, to camouflage the true ownership of the Velarde account.

Ocampo's testimony on these points assumed greater significance because they were given in the course of a virtual cross-examination. Under existing rules of evidence, testimony given on cross-examination has a stronger value than when given on direct testimony.

Boosted prosecution case

By extensively questioning Ocampo, the senators may have unwittingly boosted the prosecution's position that her testimony is material and relevant to the proceedings.

The information the senators were able to elicit from Ocampo can no longer be ignored. In the hands of a skillful advocate, parts of her testimony can be used to support or dispute the validity of the graft and corruption charge against the President.

It is reasonable to expect the senators who actively participated in Ocampo's questioning to fight strongly for the inclusion into the records of the proceedings the answers she gave to their questions.

Since the public already heard her testimony and she came across as a credible and competent witness, some senators may find it politically risky to openly demand the exclusion of her testimony on the basis of a technicality—materiality and relevancy—that even some lawyers find difficult to understand.

Lawyer's advice

Equitable PCIBank made a deft move when, as testified to by Ocampo, it consulted an outside counsel, not its in-house lawyer, before it volunteered to submit to the impeachment court, through Ocampo, the documents of the Velarde account.

When Ocampo stated that her taking the witness stand and submitting what a senator described as "confidential bank records" without the consent of the depositor (or Jose Velarde) was made after clearance was given to her by the outside counsel, she effectively deflected whatever questions could have been thrown at her if she did not have that counsel's advice.

Under existing rules, when an employee or officer of a corporation acts upon the advice of a lawyer on any matter involving the performance of his duties and responsibilities, he can properly claim that he acted in good faith and without malice in case the motivation of the subject action is questioned.

With Ocampo pointing to the outside counsel as her resource person in regard to the alleged violation of confidentiality of bank records, the burden of defending the legality of the opening of bank records shifted to the lawyer who advised the bank to release the documents.

If that lawyer is forced to take the witness stand to defend the validity of his action, either by the defense or the senators, expect the arguments and counter-arguments to be long winded and tedious, with neither party giving an inch to the other

No lawyer-senator will risk crossing swords with a private lawyer on a legal issue outside of a committee investigation where they have the power to shut up or prevent the people they invite from talking.

In a televised forum like the impeachment trial, nothing would be more humiliating to a lawyer-senator than to be humbled in public by somebody he does not consider his peer.

Pandora's box

Ocampo's testimony on certain acts committed by Chua and Dichaves after the impeachment trial had started has opened a Pandora's box of sorts.

Chua's role in the opening of the Velarde account and his suggestion to Ocampo that "she should protect the President" cannot be ignored in the consideration of the graft and corruption charge.

The defense may be forced to put Chua on the witness stand at a later date to explain or deny his alleged participation in the opening of a questionable bank account and what appears to be efforts to "suppress" the release of incriminating bank documents.

Dichaves is in similar hot water. If Ocampo's testimony is to be believed, he tried, on Dec. 11 and Dec. 13, to alter the documents of the Velarde account to make it appear that he is the holder of that account.

Obstruction of justice

This alleged act constitutes obstruction of justice or tampering with evidence that is vital to the hearing of the impeachment charges against the President. Even if the prosecution does not summon Dichaves to testify, some senators are expected to demand his presence at the impeachment court to get to the bottom of the aborted cover-up.

Yesterday's hearing must have been traumatic for defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza. His name was dragged into the controversy when his presence at a meeting with Dichaves and other unnamed personalities in his law office was mentioned in the course of Ocampo's testimony.

For a lawyer who did not need to take on the job of defending the President, it must have been an unforgettable experience.

Hornets taste 3rd straight loss

PORTLAND, Oregon—The Charlotte Hornets lost their third straight game, and then coach Paul Silas lost his temper. Bonzi Wells scored 16 points in just 25 minutes and Rasheed Wallace grabbed a career-high 18 rebounds as the Portland Trail Blazers beat the Charlotte Hornets 89-67 Monday night. In the only other game, Minnesota beat Houston 106-96. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Olympic boxing champ killed in crash

MOSCOW— Olympic boxing champion Bekzat Sattarkhanov has been killed in a road accident, the ITAR-TASS agency reported on Monday. Sattarkhanov, 20, was killed shortly before midnight on Sunday in the south of the former Soviet republic, in a car travelling from Shimkent to Turkestan. Sattarkhanov won the Olympic boxing 57kg (featherweight) division gold medal in Sydney, beating Ricardo Juarez of the United States in the final. *AFP*

SEA GAMES TEAM

PSC sets silver medal as basis for selection

BY JUNE NAVARRO

PSC chair Carlos Tuason yesterday proposed at least a silver-medal finish instead of a bronze medal as one of the criteria for the selection of national athletes competing in the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur in September.

Tuason believed a silver medal earned during either the past two SEA Games—in 1997 (Jakarta) and 1999 (Brunei)—is an ideal standard for choosing the members of the national team considering the relatively tough competition abroad.

He noted that since the country's Southeast Asian neighbors are gearing up for the biennial games by casting their lot on athletes whom they consider as gold medal potentials, it is necessary to upgrade the guidelines by which athletes are selected.

"With a silver medal, we could go to gold. But with a bronze, we could go to lead," said Tuason, who stressed the need to form a competitive team due to financial constraints.

As an example, Tuason bared the composition of the shooting team during the 1997 Jakarta SEAG were composed of silver medalists for individual events while gold medalists made up the team event.

He also promised to set up the criteria within the month with close coordination with the POC.

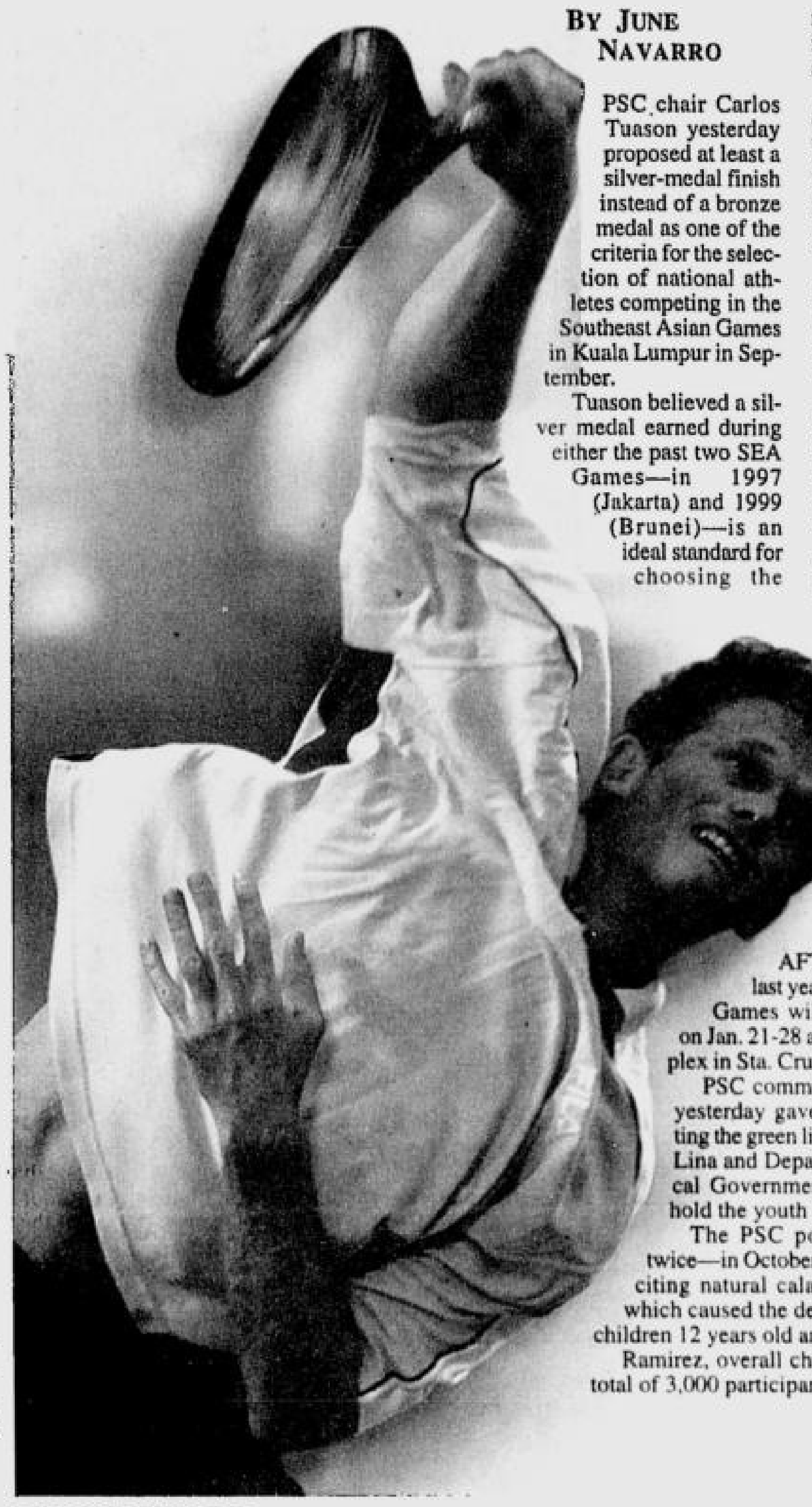
Last month, the Philippine Olympic Committee joined hands with the PSC to create a task force, which is tasked to set up the criteria for the selection of athletes.

The PSC-POC task force, formed by Olympic chief Celso Dayrit and Tuason, earlier agreed bronze medalists during the Jakarta and Brunei SEA Games should at least be given an opportunity to don the national colors in this year's SEAG.

"Initially, we agreed that a bronze-medal finish would be enough to determine the composition of the team. But personally, a silver medal during the past SEA Games would be a better criteria," said Tuason.

The PSC-POC task force is set to meet within the week and discuss the SEA Games guidelines.

He added despite the troubles hounding some national sports associations, particularly basketball, cycling and weightlifting, the athletes should continue improving their craft since the PSC failed not even once in releasing their monthly allowances.



LOSING EFFORT

Wayne Ferreira of South Africa serves against Ruchard Fromberg of Australia during their Hopman Cup encounter in Perth Tuesday. Fromberg won, 7-6, 7-5. In other matches, little-known Belgian Olivier Rochus stunned US Open champion and world No. 2 Marat Safin, 6-2, 1-6, 6-3, as Belgium tripped Russia following Kim Clijsters' earlier 6-1, 6-4 win over Elena Likhovtseva. Earlier Monday, the United States beat Slovakia, 3-0. AP

Batang Pinoy pushing through

BY JUNE NAVARRO

AFTER being shelved twice last year, the Second Batang Pinoy Games will definitely push through on Jan. 21-28 at the San Luis Sports Complex in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

PSC commissioner William Ramirez yesterday gave this assurance after getting the green light from Laguna Gov. Joey Lina and Department of Interior and Local Government and DECS officials to hold the youth games.

The PSC postponed the BP Games twice—in October and December last year—citing natural calamities such as typhoons, which caused the delay of games designed for children 12 years old and below.

Ramirez, overall chair of the event, expects a total of 3,000 participants from all over the country to troop to Laguna. He said as of Dec. 11, a total of 2,649 athletes have already confirmed their participation.

The huge chunk of the athletes would come from the Visayas and Mindanao, Ramirez added.

Assured of a P29-million budget, he said the PSC is more concerned about the number of participants and the number of events tapped to be disputed in the event.

"I don't see any problem in running the event. We can even run the tournament without the problem of money," said Ramirez, who took the cudgels for former commissioner Monico Puentevella in handling the project.

Last Dec. 22, the PSC inspected the venue which Ramirez said was thoroughly completed in time for the games.

He said the PSC will meet with other national sports associations interested in joining the games tomorrow to finalize the number of events, which will be showcased.

Missing Jimwell Torion

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

HIS early basketball years promised nothing lofty. But when he came to the Big City in the late 1990s to play for Batang Red Bull he started his rise to fame-and fortune.

Jimwell Torion was born into a harsh world 25 years ago in Argao, Cebu.

"Jimwell and I come from poor families," said his longtime friend and teammate Junthy Valenzuela after Torion figured in a career-threatening car accident a few weeks before the opening of last year's Philippine Basketball Association season. "Jimwell knows that playing in the PBA will help his family." Torion survived the crash and underwent several operations to bring back his mangled face to normal. Aside from that, there were no other serious body injuries and he suffered no fractures.

Later on, he was man enough to admit that he drank two bottles of beer during a party and the accident happened while he was driving his car which was rammed by a truck at an Ermita intersection early in the morning of Jan. 7, 2000.

Soon after, Torion rejoined his team, promising not to stay up late again and asking for forgiveness and understanding from Batang Red Bull higher-ups, including franchise owner George Chua, coach Yeng Guiao, team manager Tony Chua and consultant Andy Jao. They all understood and ultimately forgave Torion for his misconduct.

In the PBA, Torion, a fleet-footed 5-foot-9 point guard, became an overnight success, playing with raw courage and displaying the ability to breathe life into his team. Batang Red Bull landed a respectable third in the recent Governors Cup, the best finish ever for the neophyte team in the star-studded professional league. And with multi-talented Kerby Raymundo suiting up again plus the addition of the No. 1 pick in the draft (possibly the fancy playing Willie Miller, son of an American based in Olongapo City), Batang Red Bull is now considered as the most feared quintet in the season-opening All-Filipino Conference starting on Jan. 28.

Torion, however, may miss the All-Filipino because he may opt to undergo surgery for a dislocated shoulder, an old injury he sustained while playing in the Philippine Basketball League. But he will play this season, that's for sure, to bedazzle the PBA crowd with his God-given gifts of speed, long range shooting ability and ball-hawking. Still, Torion is well-advised to control his deeds of derring do. The sooner, the better.

* * *

SPORTS TRIVIA. In the golden past, top athletes excelled in at least two different sports. Dr. Enrique "Nene" Novales belonged to that extraordinary breed. The pioneer practicing physician in Olongapo City, Novales played football (as a goalie) for Ateneo under the late Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson and basketball for the University of the Philippines and the University of Santo Tomas. In 1941 Novales was named to the national team that competed in the first Greater Asian Co-prosperity Sphere Games held in Tokyo shortly before Japan ignited World War II. His teammates included Fely and Gabby Fajardo, Charlie Borek, Francisco Vestil, Salvador Siao, Simon LaO, Bobby Jones, Eduardo Cortes, Bob Kessey and Arturo Rius. Their coach was Jacinto Ciria Cruz. During the Japanese occupation, Novales was a member of the MICAA champion team Nippon Gempi Kabukishi Kaisha, a tannery factory in Meycauayan, Bulacan, owned by the Hermoso family. Olympian Filomeno Mariano coached the team. The team was quartered in Meycauayan and would only come to Manila on playing days (Sundays and Thursdays), riding in a bus fueled by charcoal because gasoline was not available during the Japanese occupation.

PBL warns cager who applied for draft

BY DENNIS EROA

TRISTAN Codamon's bright future as a cage star is being clouded by a not-so unwise decision.

Despite a live contract with PBL squad Blu Sun Power, the six-foot Codamon decided to cast his luck in the coming PBA annual draft.

"Tristan's contract will last till 2003. It's not fair for Blu if we'll just allow this to happen. The contract must be upheld," Blu team manager Silliman Sy told the INQUIRER. He didn't discount the possibility of seeking legal means in order to force Codamon to honor the contract.

Sy added a copy of the contract is already forwarded to the PBL Commissioner's Office headed by Chino Trinidad.

The PBA and the PBL have a memorandum of agreement regarding the drafting of players. Trinidad said that no PBL player can enter the draft without the blessing of the commissioner's office.

Sy noted that the Blu management had already gave way when Codamon broke his contract by not suiting up for the Detergent Kings in the ongoing Challenge Cup.

The INQUIRER learned that Codamon elected to become a practice player for Alaska.

"Codamon is sending the wrong signal to other players. Blu is also going to send the wrong signal if it will not act accordingly," Sy said.

This is the second time that Codamon, a native of Mountain Province, finds himself in a controversy. At the start of last year's UAAP basketball championship, Codamon was axed by the Adamson team under coach Luigi Trillo for discrepancies in his high school marks.

Without Codamon's skywalking acts, the Falcons went 0-13 (win-loss) in the UAAP.

Els' late arrival hit

MELBOURNE, Australia—World No.2 Ernie Els has committed to play the World Matchplay Championships starting Wednesday but his late arrival has some players asking why he's bothering.

Els, seeded one here, will be the last of the 64-man field to arrive in Australia when his plane touches down in Melbourne at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

It means the South African will be blind when he tees off on Wednesday at 2 p.m., having left himself no time for a practice round.

Unless he can climb out of bed at the crack of dawn he won't even get a look at the notoriously difficult Metropolitan Golf Club course with the first match in the $US5 million challenge getting under way at 9:20 a.m.

Most of the other competitors, including leading rivals Tom Lehmann, Hal Sutton and Vijay Singh, arrived on Sunday or Monday and have been around the course several times. *AFP*

Woods champ of champs

PARIS—French sports daily L'Equipe on Tuesday unveiled Tiger Woods as its "Champion of champions" for 2000, the first golfer to take the accolade. ***AFP***

RAYMUNDO RETURNING

No need for Red Bull buildup—Guiao

WITH prized slotman Kerby Raymundo around, Red Bull need not contemplate on a major buildup.

This was the blunt message of Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao as he announced yesterday the return of the 6-foot-6 Raymundo to the Thunder fold in the coming PBA season.

Raymundo, 1999 NCAA MVP, took a leave of absence in the PBA after the league sanctioned him for falsifying eligibility documents last year.

Picking first in the PBA rookie annual draft on Jan. 14, Red Bull would rather pass up the opportunity since the Thunder is already a complete team with only minor changes on tap, said Guiao.

"We will look at the final list of applicants and make an assessment. But as far as Red Bull is concerned, we don't need added firepower since the core of the team is already intact," said Guiao at the PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn Manila.

He said with Mike Pennisi, Davon Harp and Raymundo in the lineup, Red Bull will have a potent brew in the frontline, an area which the Thunder should add depth.

The only problem the Thunder will encounter, Guiao revealed, is the lack of a reliable playmaker since Jimwell Torion will have to sit it out for at least three months after suffering from a dislocated shoulder.

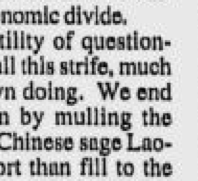
"Since Jimwell cannot play for at least three months, we should start looking for a temporary replacement to orchestrate our plays," said Guiao.

June Navarro

Reflections

WHAT CAN I SAY

Bebo Quiros



2001. The dawn of the new millennium. We are three columns away from completing a year as a contributor to the sports section of the Inquirer. Much has happened since then. We pause to reflect on our rite of passage, not only as a writer but also as a fellow traveler on spaceship Earth. After all, there is life outside a weekly column.

Less horse talk today. We sit at our desk in silent anticipation of what will transpire this afternoon. The impeachment trial resumes. It is the 2nd of January. We are reminded of the words of Thomas Mann (A Magic Mountain): "A man lives not only his personal life as an individual, but also, consciously or unconsciously, the life of his epoch and his contemporaries." This trial is not just the trial of the President alone, not just his personal struggle to be witnessed over the telly. It is our trial, our struggle, individually and collectively as a nation.

We find no comfort in the knowledge that the mano-a-mano at the Senate will eventually come to an end. The social and political wounds this trial has caused will continue to fester long after the last gavel echoes the finality of judgement. The approach of the electoral season promises no end to personal or ethnic rancor given the typical candidate's emphasis on the great economic divide.

We realize the futility of questioning heaven's hand in all this strife, much of which is of our own doing. We end this short rumination by mulling the words of 6th century Chinese sage Lao-Tsu: "Better stop short than fill to the brim. Oversharpen the blade, and the edge will soon blunt. Amass a store of gold and jade, and no one can protect it. Claim wealth and titles, and disaster will follow. Retire when the work is done. This is the way of heaven."

We have always believed that a glass half-full is better than a glass half-empty, content to know that this life will always be an existence less than perfect. So too with this trial. We might have to accept half-measures at the end of the day. We have to be prepared to be less than happy. Such is heaven's way.

What now?

On 12 January 2000, we wrote... "now what will the Philracom do to top 1999 (in reference to a banner year and the successful launch of the Millenium Open Championship)?" For starters, it could promote a stakes schedule that will highlight the best of our local breed and give direction for future reinvestment in bloodstock and infrastructure. As of the second week of January, we are not even sure if the Philracom has a stakes race in mind before the end of the month." The second week of January

2001 is five days away. Again, we, as a horseowner, find ourself in the same predicament as year 2000 began. What races do we prepare for?

A good starter for January and February of any given year is to continue middle distance races from 1800m to 2000m. Our older horses have been prepared to race those distances over the last quarter of the previous racing year (the Marho Breeders Cup Classic, the PCSO Presidential Gold Cup and the Philracom Open Championship). It would be a pity to see these classic-type horses forced to go sprinting again for their bread and butter. Stakes races for three-year-olds preparing for the Triple Crown can begin in March.

Correction

With reference to last week's column, Surfing the Net, the sentence that began "For racing news..." should read this way: For racing news, on a daily basis, www.sportstoday.com.au is invaluable. The sales companies can be found at www.inglis.com.au and www.magicmillions.com.au. Kiwi racing is covered by www.onesport.nzoom.com and www.newzealandnews.net.

Washington prevails, captures Rose Bowl

PASADENA, California — Marques Tuiasosopo ran for one touchdown and passed for another as Washington won the Rose Bowl Monday after a 34-24 win over Purdue and finished the season with eight straight wins.

Washington (11-1) gave the Pac-10 its first Rose Bowl victory in five years and second in the last nine games.

The Boilermakers (8-4) were playing in their first Rose Bowl in 34 years.

Tuiasosopo missed the last three plays of the third quarter with an apparent shoulder injury but returned for the fourth and threw an 8-yard touchdown pass to Todd Elstrom to make it 27-17. Willie Hurst's 8-yard run made it 34-17 with 7:25 left.

Tuiasosopo was 16-of-22 for 138 yards, and rushed for 75 yards on 15 carries. Purdue's Drew Brees was 23-of-39 for 275 yards and two touchdowns—both to Vinny Sutherland.

Virginia Tech 41, Clemson 20

In Jacksonville, Florida, Lee Suggs ran for three touchdowns and Michael Vick ran for one and passed for another as Virginia Tech beat Clemson in the Gator Bowl.

Trainer Sangalang dies

VETERAN boxing trainer Rolando "Toti" Sangalang passed away yesterday after a lingering illness. He was 66.

Sangalang was best remembered for training three former Filipino world champions—Erbito Salavarria, Morris East and Luisito Espinosa.

His body lies at 531 Justinville 2, Imus, Cavite. Interment will be announced later.

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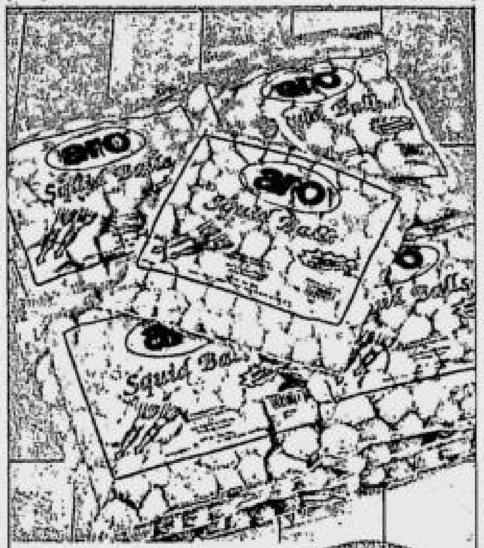

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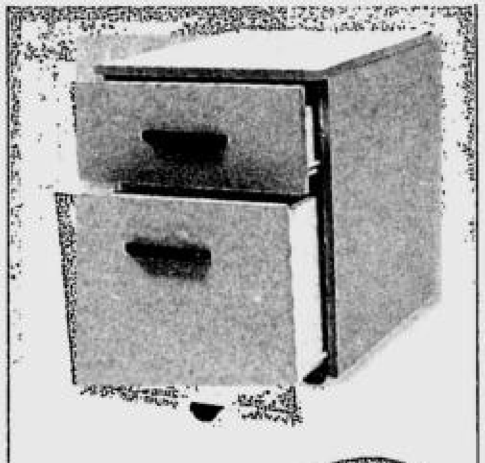

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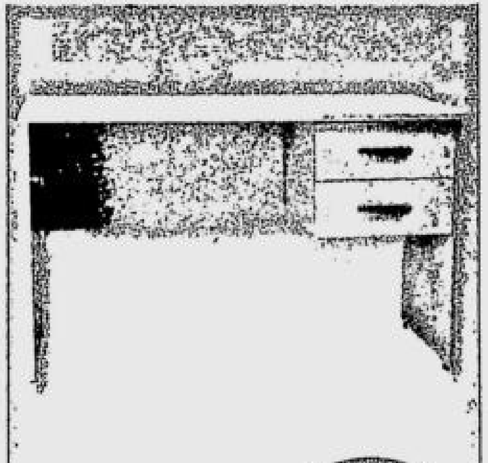

NB Office Table
Grey Color
Melamine Finish
P999

APPLE Men's Sport Shoes
M104
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SENTRY Steal Safe
V110
P3,495

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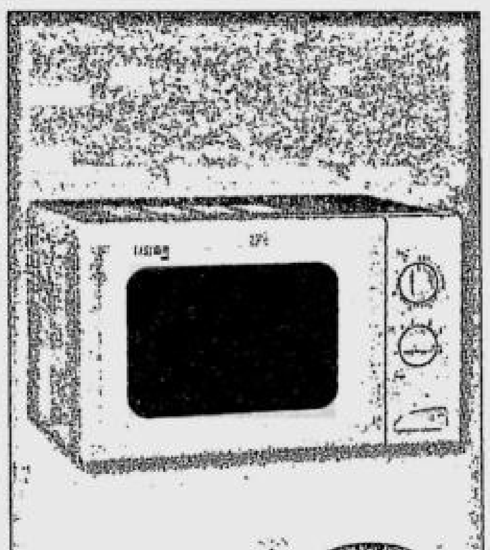

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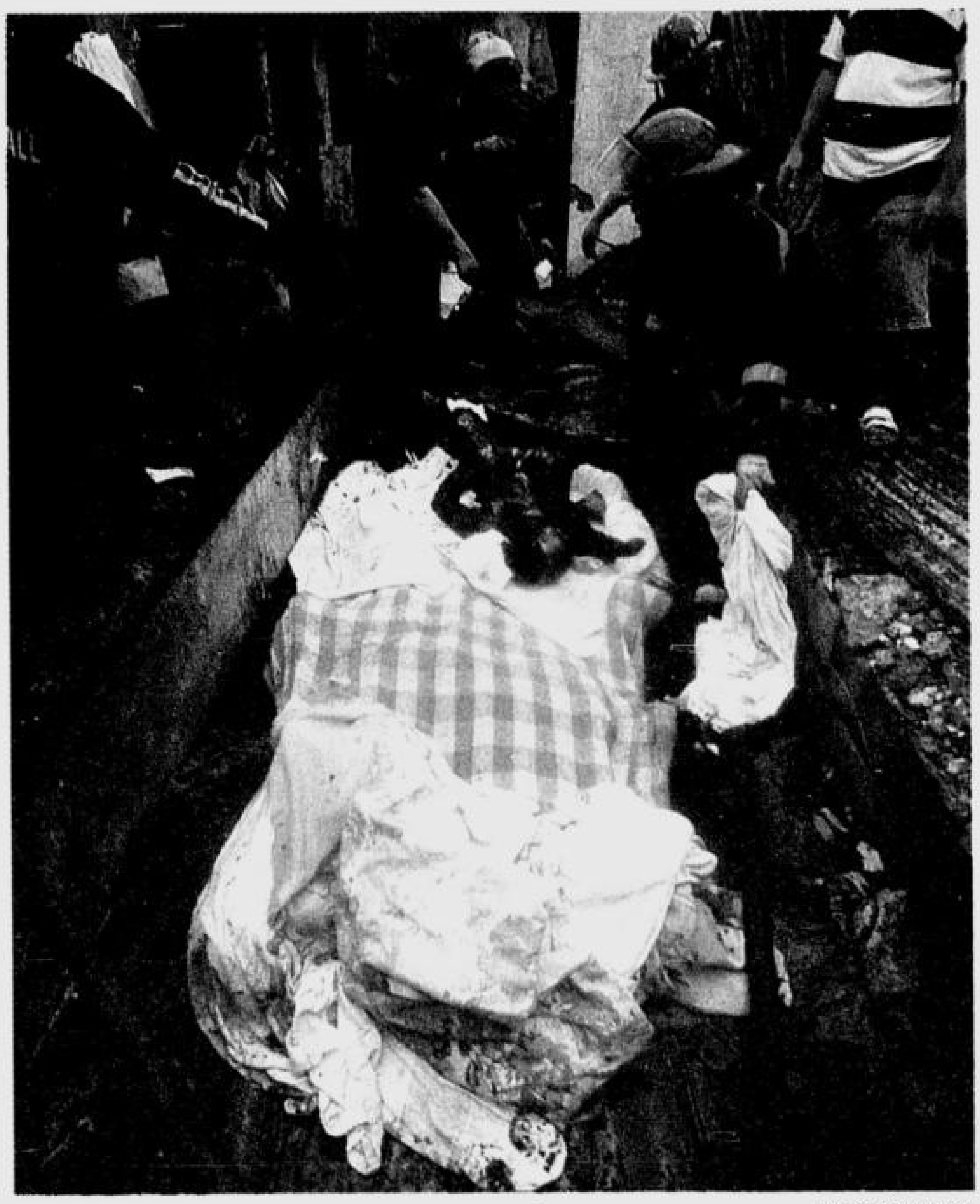
Tondo fire kills family of 6

Unpaid maid main suspect


RANDY HORMILLOSA

A COUPLE and their four children are in this pile of bodies from the Balut, Tondo fire.

BY JEROME ANING

A COUPLE and their four children were killed after their housekeeper, who had not received her salary for more than a year, allegedly set on fire the family's house in Tondo, Manila before dawn yesterday.

Fire officials identified the victims as contractor Roberto Separa Sr., 45; his wife Virginia, 45; and their children Michael, 24; Daphne, 18; Priscilla, 14; and Roberto Jr., 11.

Arson.investigators said Edna Maingan, 22, a native of General Santos City, was seen leaving the Separa residence on Moderna Street, where she worked as a maid, just as the fire broke out.

Barangay officials held Maingan and turned her over to arson investigators.

Witnesses said they saw Maingan acting suspiciously.

The fire spread and gutted seven adjacent houses, destroying some P3.5 million worth of property.

Chief Insp. Fennimore Jaudian, head of the arson division of the Manila fire bureau, said the blaze began about 5 a.m. on the second floor of the Separas' two-story house.

Investigators said the fire appeared to have started from a place where paint and thinner were stored. The flames quickly engulfed the entire house by the time the firemen arrived.

The fire was put out at 6:50 a.m.

TONDO FIRE / A18

Carmona landfill stays closed–Bong

BY NELSON F. FLORES
AND AGNES E. DONATO

REVILLA

CAVITE Gov. Ramon Revilla Jr. remained firm in his decision to keep the Carmona Sanitary Landfill (CSL) closed even as garbage "colonies" have begun to appear on major thoroughfares in Metro Manila.

In Antipolo City in Rizal, residents have tightened their watch over the San Mateo Sanitary Landfill (SMSL) while an alternative dump for Metro Manila garbage has not been announced.

Revilla said in a radio interview that the people of Cavite are united in opposing the reopening of the CSL.

He said he would check on reports that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) would secretly dump garbage in Carmona.

CARMONA/ A21

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Cowboy Grill [illegible] Arquiza St., Mabini, Mla	REPLIKA/AGENDA DECADE SOCIETY	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill 41 Remedios St., Malate Mla	GOALKEYS FEEDBACK	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎521.8143
Cowboy Grill Novaliches, Quezon City	SWEET BLOOD KNIGHTS	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎453.4329
[illegible] Yale St. cor Aurora, Cubao	AEGIS PROPHECY	P100 ENTRANCE FEE ☎913.7202
KAMPO 2088 #47 West Avenue Q.C.	FREEVERSE MAGICTOUCH/X-PROJECT	P200 CONSUMABLE 411.9931/926.1260
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TIA MARIA'S Jupiter St., Makati	ORDINARY PEOPLE	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎897.7603
TIA MARIA'S Remedios cor Cabildo, Malate	TH-3 VERSE 2	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎522.0429
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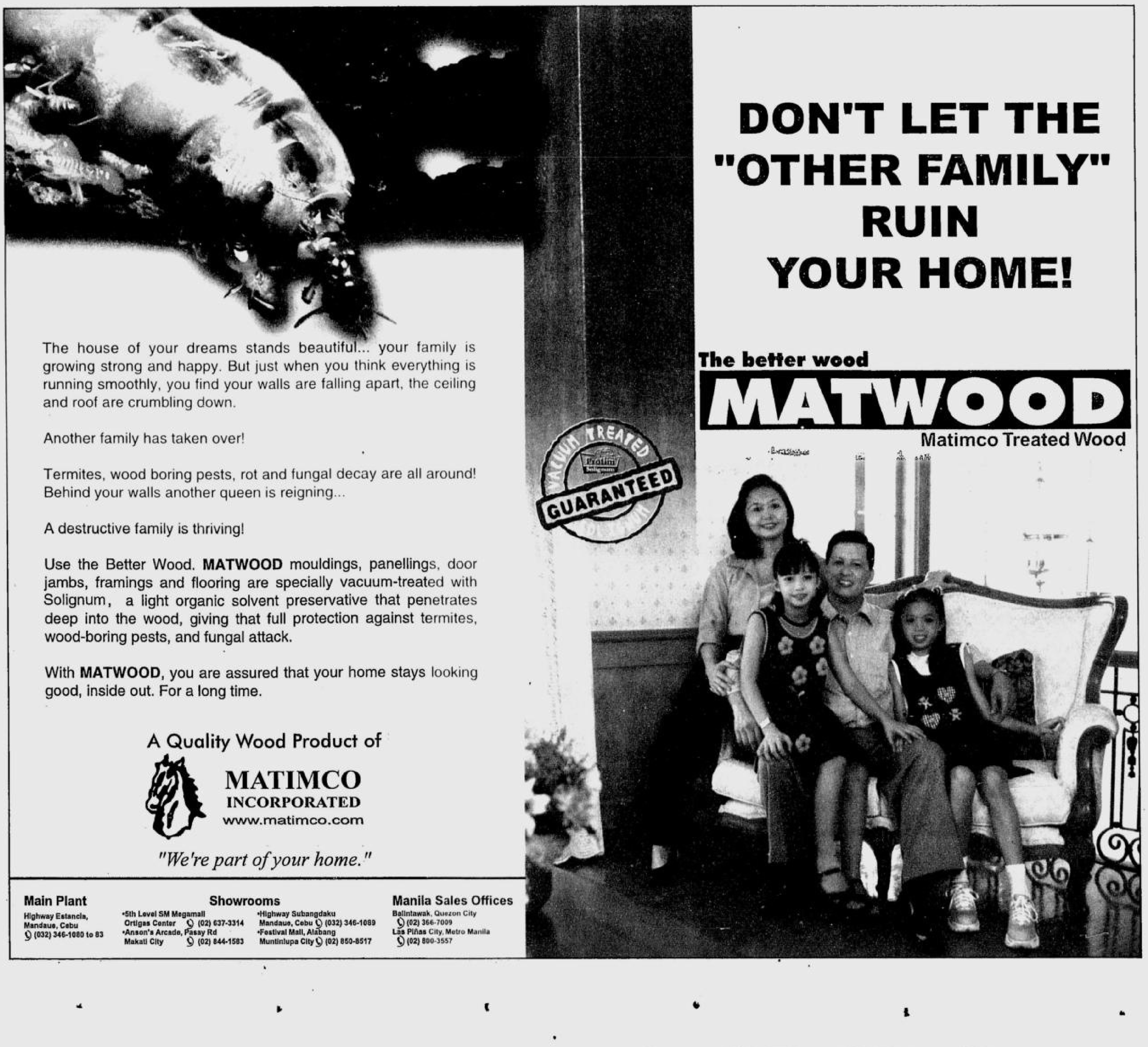
Ka Freddie Music Restaurant Marcos Highway, Antipolo	NONOY BAJAR AMIE MARTINEZ	P20 ENTRANCE FEE ☎677.0795
Partyplace San Fernando Pampanga	RAISA CAYABYAB YIN YANG	MONGOLIAN BARBEQUE WED., FRI., & SAT.



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Malonzo, opposition trade insults

By Christian V. Esguerra

"*HINDI na kailangang pabahuin ang pangalan ni* (Caloocan Mayor Rey) Malonzo *dahil matagal na itong mabaho, kasimbaho ng nagkalat na basura dito sa* Caloocan (Malonzo's name doesn't need stinking up because it already smells just like the garbage piling up in the city)."

Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio again lambasted the administration of his archrival, a promise of more fiery rhetoric now that the local election is nearing.

Asistio was answering Malonzo's allegations that the Caloocan congressman derailed the mayor's projects to gain an edge in the coming election, according to Councilor Edgar Erice.

Erice, one of the mayor's staunch supporters, claimed that Asistio, through Vice Mayor Oscar Malapitan and opposition councilors, has always been trying to score "points against Malonzo."

"He (Asistio) has the motive," Erice said yesterday. "He's obviously the one behind what the opposition is doing. If the opposition succeeds in derailing our projects, it will surely be a point against Malonzo."

Asistio was quick to launch his counter-offensive.

"Why blame somebody else?" Asistio said. "Malonzo and his men should reflect because they've done so much disservice to the people. Teachers have not received their augmentation allowance, garbage is everywhere, employees' salaries are delayed."

Erice alleged that the move of Malapitan and the opposition councilors to delay the approval of the city's P1.7-billion budget for 2001 was the handiwork of Asistio.

The congressman answered: "The delay in the budget approval is simply a matter of poor governance on the part of Malonzo. I don't have anything to do with that. It's a local issue.

"They (Malonzo and Erice) are imagining things. They created their own ghosts, now they're afraid of these same ghosts."

The city council under Malapitan approved the much-delayed P1.7-billion budget only on Dec. 30 after a heated session.

Malonzo called for the special session to expedite the approval of the budget so the local government could fund its projects this year.

But Malapitan claimed the council could not just expedite the approval since the budget ordinance sponsored by Erice allegedly had defects.

The council, mostly made up of Malonzo supporters, signed the ordinance anyway.

"They (opposition members) should go beyond politics," Erice said. "The public's interest must prevail.

"The local government is working very hard to deliver services. The opposition will not succeed in derailing our projects. We'll just do our job and we will not be intimidated."

How to enjoy the Erap Theater

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(MINUS 2: From my *kumpadre*, Tony Luna of Rosario, Batangas, this timely suggestion: "It may not be a bad idea to call to the witness stand the 2 alleged '*balato*' senators to defend themselves against allegations that they received P1 million each from Ilocos Sur Gov. Chavit Singson. By making them witnesses in the ongoing impeachment proceedings, they will no longer be eligible to function as senator-judges, thereby resulting to 2 votes less for you-know-who when the Senate tribunal makes the final vote. *Nabawasan na, suwabe pa ang dating*.")

* * *

THE President grieving before a shattered little boy in the hospital on Dec. 30, Black Saturday, was Marlon Brando tearing off the white sheets from the lifeless face of his massacred son, Sonny Corleone, in the movie "The Godfather 1."

It was a very poignant moment for Erap Estrada, himself an award-winning actor.

Unlike Brando, though, the President obviously did not have to go through a rehearsal. His brows readily met in a lonesome knot, his face muscles contorted into a horrified mask.

Local movie directors had seen Erap Estrada perfect this sorrow under glaring studio lights before.

But, for last Saturday's take, the directors of the national horror theater clearly overdid themselves. The gruesome props were at their rawest.

There was the pained, grieving boy, his face scalded, his right leg missing. His father was killed in the blast and the boy struggled to mumble a name not exactly his.

True enough, there was the shaken Mr. Estrada acting his part and offering to take the boy into his arms. He said he wanted to adopt the mutilated orphan.

It was, any way you looked at it, first-class theater.

* * *

That picture also delivered the message: President Estrada cares.

You're free to believe that or not.

As expected, though, the explosion of the bombs that killed at least 15 in Metro Manila on the day of the martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal last Saturday resulted in more calls for Mr. Estrada to step down.

It's not mere speculation that our country has been terribly savaged and bloodied under the Estrada misadministration.

By plain estimate, the country, mainly the economy, has been mutilated twice as brutally than that burned boy who kept crying in his bed.

The common cry among elders is no longer for a piece of decent, safe, living space for themselves.

There's unanimous grief for the young, whose future has been shattered wholesale while Erap Estrada continues to horrify the national gallery.

But, as part of the script, the lead actor angrily threw the blame at his enemies, mainly the rich sector of Makati.

Erap, as expected, readily delivered his lines. It was good theater.

* * *

In yesterday's INQUIRER alone, several big groups, including the La Sallian family (Mr. Estrada's own Ateneo had done its part earlier) and a US-based association begged, and I mean begged, President Estrada to consider the patriotic act of resigning.

Well, sorry folks, if Erap Estrada had not done some acting in the past, he would have reconsidered.

But the man on trial for bribery and corruption, to mention only two sins, cannot be expected to quit. He's not stepping, he's not resigning. Reason: he's visibly enjoying his own theater.

Hasn't the President insisted more than twice that all is just like the movies, where the battered *bida* would emerge victorious in the end?

In fact, Mr. Estrada has regained his original award-winning cast, topped by Fernando Poe Jr. as evidenced in that thanksgiving Mass in Malacañang, so the citizenry must stand by for an even grander show.

* * *

Who are we to complain? Everybody has so far been properly entertained.

Yes, we're not supposed to flinch and groan. In the first place, we all have been kept at the edge of our seats by that Erap Impeachment Blockbuster at the Senate.

We have not only learned to admire new heroes like Davide and Ocampo, we were also able to identify certified, big-mouthed villains.

You say you're not enjoying the show?

Well, when the public started to wonder during the holiday break when the impeachment hearings would resume, the directors offered a surprise highlight. Real bombs exploded on Saturday, which kept the citizenry both frightened and very excited.

Next flashed that unforgettable, sorrowful pose of the leading man before the mutilated orphan at the hospital.

It was fine, award-winning theater. Hope you enjoy it, too.

30-year-old man nabbed for rape of 13-year-old

POLICE yesterday arrested a 30-year-old man suspected of attempting to rape a 13-year-old girl at the height of the New Year's Eve celebrations in Caloocan City.

The girl's mother caught vendor Federico Hernandez Jr., of 8th Avenue, Daang Bakal in Caloocan, on top of her daughter, a first year high school student, on Monday at about 4 a.m., police said.

The girl was alone in their house in Daang Bakal while her mother attended a party in a neighbor's house, said Insp. Virginia Tejuco, head of the Caloocan Police Children's and Women's Concern Desk.

Police said the girl did not lock the front door of the house since she was expecting her mother to return soon.

Hernandez entered the house and began kissing and touching the girl at knifepoint, police said.

But the mother's arrival stopped the rape attempt.

Tejuco said the mother shouted for help when she saw Hernandez on top of her daughter.

Hernandez fled, but SPO1 Manny Manlaque of the Northern Police District and barangay watchers arrested him yesterday at about 8:30 a.m. while he was sleeping at the Plaza Dos mini park on 10th Avenue, also in Caloocan.

Hernandez is now detained at the Caloocan City police headquarters and will be facing charges of attempted rape that police will file before the Caloocan City prosecutor's office. *Christian V. Esguerra*

AFTER the fire, a crowd mills in front of what used to be the house of the Separas (below). RANDY HORMILLOSA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, January 3, 2001
Week Before Epiphany

1st Reading: I Jn 2:29—3:6
Gospel: Jn 1:29-34

When John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. It is he of whom I said: A man comes after me who is already ahead of me, for he was before me. I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing to prepare for him, so that he might be revealed in Israel."

And John also gave this testimony, "I saw the Spirit coming down on him like a dove from heaven and resting on him. I myself did not know him but God who sent me to baptize told me: 'You will see the Spirit coming down and resting on the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' Yes, I have seen! and I declare that this is the Chosen One of God."

Commentary:

John the Baptist's great mission was not only to prepare the way for Christ but to point him out when he at last came. Our mission is to point Jesus out to people. But we can only do so if we live uprightly and humbly like John the Baptist. Uprightness is necessary. Pope Paul VI wrote in Evangelii Nuntiandi, "Modern man listens more to witnesses than to teachers. And if he listens to teachers it is because they are also witnesses." John the Baptist was a witness and a humble one. A proud person will cover the Lord by a show of his talents instead of showing the way to him. The humble witness desires only to make Christ seen and known. Are you a humble witness or a humbug?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (ELECTORAL LAW)--Use of nicknames in certificates of candidacy—Even if petitioner decided to use "JTV" as her nickname for purposes of the 11 May 1998 elections, one must never forget that she never used it as a nickname before she filed her certificate of candidacy. The nickname which the second paragraph of Section 74 of the Omnibus Election Code allows to be included in the certificate of candidacy is that by which [the candidate] is generally or popularly known." This clearly means the nickname "by which one has been generally or popularly known before the filing of the certificate of candidacy, but not what the candidate wants to thereafter use. By her own statement under oath in her affidavit, petitioner solemnly declared that she was generally and popularly known in every barangay in Oriental Mindoro as "Girlie" before and after she filed her certificate of candidacy. [Citations omitted.] [*En Banc*, Chief Justice Davide, Jr., Villarosa v. House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal, G. R. No. 143351, September 14, 2000]

Digest by R. B. Vera

Tondo fire kills family of 6

(From page A17)

Jaudian said Maingan was arrested mainly on circumstantial evidence. Barangay officials told firemen that Maingan was seen leaving the house just as it was beginning to burn.

Officials claimed the maid did not shout for help or raise an alarm. She merely stood silently on the front yard and watched the house burn.

Also, a lighter was allegedly found on the maid although she admitted she did not smoke.

Investigators were initially puzzled as to why the victims, except for Roberto Sr., were still in their beds when their bodies were recovered.

Inspector Jaudian said the maid was in a daze and could not be interrogated properly. He claimed Maingan was behaving strangely and could be mentally unstable.

Initial investigation showed Maingan had been the family's maid since 1998 and had complained to friends in the neighborhood that she had not been paid her salary since August 1998.

The fire official said the maid recently asked for a portion of her salary so she could go on holiday. But Roberto Sr. reportedly refused.

According to one neighbor, Maingan recounted how she was allegedly mocked by the couple, who told Maingan she could go home if she wanted to by riding on a broomstick.

Maingan is detained at the arson department's office near the San Lazaro Hospital. She will be charged with arson with murder.

Mosquito coil firm goes up in smoke

A FIREMAN was injured while an estimated P8 million in property was destroyed when fire hit a mosquito coil factory in Pasig City early yesterday morning.

FO3 Roberto Garrido, of the Pasig City fire station, sustained minor lacerations and abrasions on the left hand while he and other firemen were trying to put out the blaze at the Fumakila Laboratory, manufacturer of Lion Katol.

FO3 Zacarias Manaog said the fire started on the second floor of the two-story building on Amang Rodriguez Avenue in Barangay Santolan at about 1 a.m. yesterday.

Security guard Conrado Siblit was reportedly the only one around when the fire started, as employees were on leave for the holidays.

But Manaog said arson investigators have yet to establish the cause of the fire.

"It is necessary that we conduct a follow-up investigation to determine if foul play is involved," he added.

The damage reached P8 million because most of the property destroyed consisted of computer units and office supplies, he said.

A total of 13 fire trucks from the nearby cities of Pasig, Mandaluyong and Marikina and the municipality of San Juan came to help put out the fire.

Agnes E. Donato

2 men kill woman, injure 2 in assault on QC house

By Philip C. Tubeza

A HOUSEWIFE was killed while three of her relatives, including her 6-year-old son and a seven-month pregnant woman, were critically injured after two men burst into their home in Quezon City and shot them on New Year's Day.

Emily F. de Asis, 28, of Oliveros Drive, Balintawak, Quezon City, did not make it alive to the hospital. Her son Marco, 6, and pregnant cousin Marianne de la Cruz, 23, and De la Cruz's husband Francisco Pakaonsis were seriously injured, said investigator PO2 Joseph Dino.

De la Cruz and her husband are still in critical condition. De la Cruz had to undergo a Caesarian section to save her child, Dino said.

They were watching television inside their home when the two men, who wore bonnets, barged in at about 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

Dino said the two men were armed with M-16 Armalite rifles. After shooting the house occupants, the armed men fled, he added.

De Asis, Marco and Pakaonsis were brought to the Quezon City General Hospital. De Asis was declared dead on arrival, from a bullet that hit her left arm and entered her body.

Marco had bullet wounds on an arm and a leg but doctors said he was now out of danger, Dino said.

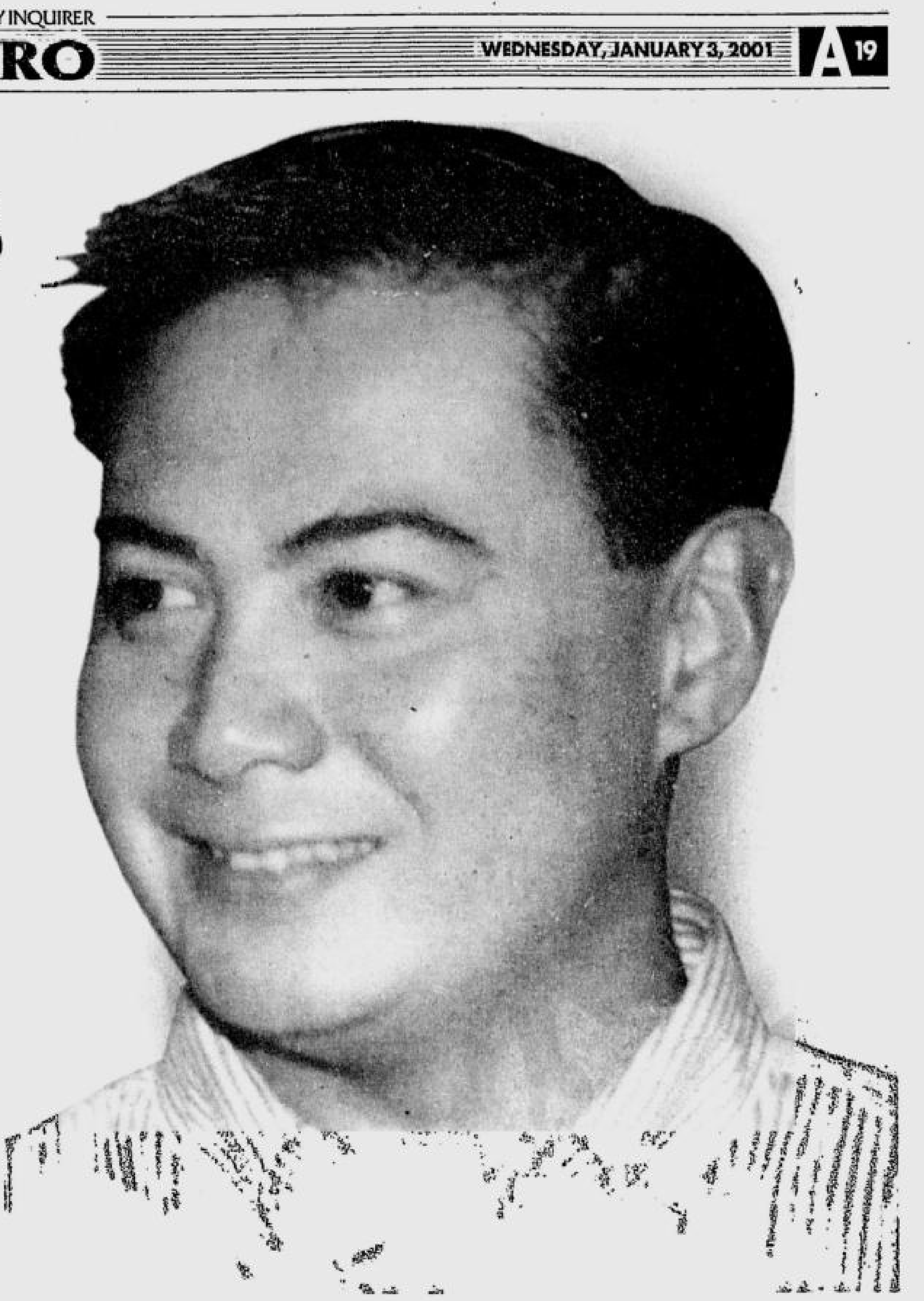
Police were interviewing witnesses, including De Asis' husband Magdaleno.

Magdaleno was with the victims during the attack but he was unhurt, Dino said.

Police recovered seven spent M-16 bullets at the shooting scene, he added.

Another Planas in QC politics

INTERVIEW



HE has two well-known, formidable women for aunts – the late Manila Councilor Carmen Planas, and former Quezon City Charito Planas. Now Quezon City Councilor Mike Planas wants to be as well-known as these women, and occupy a higher public office, at least in his city.

He wants to be vice mayor of Quezon City, although he would look more at home in entertainment where, he admits, he had wanted to be. But as he speaks, he shows there is more to Mike Planas than what the media show.

While he is answering questions, his doting wife, Pat-P Daza, ABS-CBN corporate communications director, is going around the table with a tiny camera, squatting, stooping, sitting on her haunches, as she shoots pictures of her husband.

The interview takes place under the cool December night sky on the lawn outside a restaurant at the Rockwell Center.

Do you have a unit here?

No. I can't afford it.

But you are a member?

Yes. We can afford only the membership.

How old are you?

I'm thirty-six and am I young-looking *pa ba*?

***Oo naman.* Why are you running for vice mayor?**

First, I have spent so much time in the city council. Six years *na*... I believe that I am suited to become the next vice mayor and the next presiding officer of the city council because of my background.

Who is you running mate?

Right now there's no one yet, but I am the LDP (Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino) chairman for Quezon City. I was appointed during the last convention last December 4 at the Manila Hotel. (Movie star and former vice mayor) Herbert Bautista and I were chosen to be the chairpersons. We're co-chairs for Quezon City.

What if he (Herbert) is running for mayor and he asks you to be his running mate?

If he runs for mayor, then definitely I will be the vice mayor because we belong to the same party. But if he runs under a different banner, *kunyari sumama siya sa* Lakas, then automatic, *wala na siya* as chairman and I'll take over the LDP chairmanship alone.

Why vice mayor, not mayor?

You know, elections in Quezon City are kind of expensive, especially if you're running for mayor. There are 1.1 million voters in Quezon City. That's not a joke.

There's a trash problem in Quezon City. What are you doing about it?

Well, actually that's our number-one problem. We at the city council, we know that that is the mayor's problem, it is an executive problem. But the city council, we help by coming up with appropriation ordinances. *Kunyari* the mayor asks us to release a supplemental budget of P200 million to pay garbage collectors. That's what we do. But most of the time, I oppose the mayor (Mel Mathay Jr.) because I know that is not the solution – you keep on collecting the garbage but you don't know where to dump it.

But you're not against the mayor?

Not totally. Most of the time. I believe that one way, or probably the best way, to solve it is through sorting and recycling, and the government should support our recyclers. The problem is, the government is not doing that.

Say, you will recycle only aluminum items, he will recycle only paper, another one will recycle only plastic, then all are supported by the local government. You should be exempted as far as you business permit and real property taxes are concerned so long as you do a good job in recycling.

What's wrong with the people in Quezon City?

Wala namang problema sa tao. I think the problem is still in the government, which should be providing better services at the very least.

Maybe, what will make me happy is to see Quezon City with a mayor who will provide basic services.

Maybe the mayor is having a hard time because of lack of budget. For the mayor to be able to work and function effectively, he should, first, be able to collect the taxes effectively also.

What's wrong with Quezon City?

A lot. We have a lot of people, a population of about two million, so we generate a lot of garbage, about 2,000 metric tons a day. And the budget is not enough, because of the tax collection. It's not enough.

Majority of the people in Quezon City are poor, *'di ba*?

Yes. About 52 percent of the population.

So is that the problem, the (number of) people?

Hindi. Sa dami ng tao, siyempre to be able to render good service, *'yung* basic services, the city should have a really big budget. In order to have a big budget, your tax collection should be really effective. *Sa* real property tax *lamang e ang daming nagde*-default. How about business taxes and all the other taxes, like amusement tax?

But Quezon City is not really a business community.

No. We have a business community, like Libis. We're looking at it as a business hub. A financial center. *Sayang ang* Cubao. Some 30 years ago, Cubao was a booming district. It was supposed to be a financial district. *Pero naunahan kami ng* Ortigas.

Being vice mayor will mean bigger headaches for you.

Maybe, because then I will be covering all four districts. But in terms of load of work... well, the vice mayor doesn't make ordinances and resolutions. He is the presiding officer of the city council. And, of course, he serves as the liaison man between the council and the executive, the mayor, so they could have a good working relationship, so that the council will pass programs that the executive wants implemented.

What do you have that will make you a good vice mayor?

Experience. Six years in the council. I know how ordinances and resolutions are made and passed. *Siguro* one thing I'll do as vice mayor is ensure that ordinances, whether they are politically popular or not, be passed accordingly. *Ayoko ng* railroaded.

Who's the incumbent vice mayor?

Forgot her name. (Smiles).

(The Quezon City Vice Mayor is Connie Angeles, a former movie star.)

What if you win and Rudy Fernandez becomes mayor?

Siguro, it's going to be a big challenge. But I know I will be successful in taking him to higher heights.

Who would make a good mayor, with you as vice mayor?

Sino ba ang tatakbo? There's Rudy, (Councilor) Chuck Mathay, Rep. Sonny Belmonte. *Lahat sila may mga* qualifications.

Rudy is popular. Belmonte has been a good manager and executive. Chuck is the son of the mayor and has the resources. I'm sure he has learned from the father.

Any mayor would be a good partner because I know that Planas can stand on his own. It can be Mathay-Planas, Belmonte-Planas or Fernandez-Planas.

What do you think is the strength of the Planas name?

Kalinisan. We have never been tainted.

Don't you feel pressured being a Planas?

Not that I have to live up to the name. We grew up being always with the opposition. So if I see something wrong, what can I do but oppose.

Many people will vote for you because you're young and good-looking.

That's a big help, if it can bring in the votes. But if you win, you must perform. If you don't do your job well, then don't expect yourself to be re-elected or move to a higher position.

Are you corruptible?

Everybody is. *Depende kung tatanggapin mo at tatanggapin ng konsensya mo.* Even evangelists like Jim Bakker were corrupted.

Why do you think Quezon City residents would vote for you?

Probably, because of my track record. I spent six years as councilor and I think I've authored a lot of ordinances that have been beneficial to residents.

Aside from being councilor in Quezon City, I'm also the vice president of young legislators, so we compare, say even with Baguio City or Ilocos, how they pass measures. And most of the measures, *kahit walang* quorum, *pinapasa.*

What is your educational background?

I took up Philosophy in UP, then went on to UP College of Law. But I haven't finished my Law studies yet. I took up management courses at AIM (Asian Institute of Management) and a political management program at the American University in Washington, DC.

Have you always been inclined towards politics?

Not inclined, exposed. Like my *Tita* Charito who was a former vice mayor of Quezon City, who always wanted to become city mayor but never succeeded. Like (the late) Tita Carmen Planas, the first woman councilor of Manila.

Bata pa kami noon.

Hindi. Hindi pa tayo pinapanganak noon. That was in the late '30s or early '40s.

***Kailan ka naging* inclined?**

Na-attract *ako siguro* when I was in UP, where I joined the student council. I ran and I won under Tugon, with Chito Gascon and Francis Pangilinan. From there, *tamang-tama iyong* Edsa thing *na.* I was so active against Marcos. *Nag*-Namfrel (National Movement for Free Elections) *ako*. Then Angara picked me from UP to help in his senatorial campaign. There I became even more exposed.

What was the worst thing you did as a student activist?

Nakapag-Mendiola *kami, na*-waterhose *kami.*

What do you think of show biz stars entering politics?

I have nothing against it. It's been said so many times. May I quote Dolphy: 'Madaling tumakbo, pa'no kung manalo?'

Can a rich kid like you relate to the squatters?

Bakit naman hindi? I don't think I would win if I cannot relate to them. *Sa akin, pare-pareho 'yan.* Even Pat-P, she's surprised because when I visit the barangays, I eat anything. But now that I'm on a diet, *pinipili ko na.* I don't eat carbohydrates.

How much does Pat-P coach you?

(Pat-P): A lot.

What do you think of show biz stars entering politics?

I have nothing against it. It's been said so many times. May I quote Dolphy: Madaling tumakbo, pa'no kung manalo?

Are you pro-Erap or anti-Erap?

Anti. I'm for Erap resign, impeach or oust. He has elevated corruption to an art.

What do you think of the impeachment trial?

The testimony of (bank executive Clarissa) Ocampo alone should stand already as basis for impeachment. We all know the President has a number of senators on his side. *Ang nakikita ko lang* — you can quote me – *'pag hindi siya na*-impeach, *magkakagulo ang bayan.* He will not resign *at bahala nang magkagulo ang bayan* and let the people suffer. I think that's what he's going to do. Once *hindi siya ma*-impeach, *na*-increase *na naman ang* confidence level *niya.*

It's really going to be sad for the whole country. You can just imagine all the rallies, civil disobedience. The economy will be really affected.

Did you vote for him?

I did, simply because I was hoping that Ed Angara would also win as vice president and he would be able to guide Erap. They were really a good combination.

What do you think of (Vice President) Gloria Macapagal Arroyo becoming the next president?

If Erap resigns this year, then she has three years to prove herself to be a good president. If she is able to do that, then that's good. But if not, probably, she'll face the same fate as Erap's.

Is this a typical night for you and Pat-P, having dinner here?

No, sad to say. Before I planned to run for vice mayor, we used to spend so much time together. We used to watch movies, have dinner anywhere and everywhere, I think we've tried everything. Now, *wala talaga.* Barangay *ang napupuntahan ko:* birthdays, affairs, *patay.*

What is a typical night for you now?

After all my work, I go home, spend an hour or an hour and a half talking to my wife.

Do you still see each other in the morning?

Depende sa schedule *ko pa rin dahil minsan may* 7 a.m. schedule *ako, tulog pa siya.*

Is that your natural complexion? You look tanned.

Yeah. Because I like diving. I'm an outdoor person.

Where do you dive?

Anywhere where there's big fish.

Australia?

Hindi pa. Hindi pa ako nag-dive *sa* Great Barrier Reef. *Pero,* I dove *na sa* Dominican (Republic), Barbados. I want to try the Red Sea also. *Maraming* whale sharks. I've been diving for nine years. Palawan is a good place to dive. Bohol is one of my favorites.

Have you covered the entire Quezon City?

Once you've touched the hand or met your voter in person, automatically they're yours. And one way to do that is go house to house.

How far have you covered?

Maybe 40 percent already.

How many wakes do you attend in a night?

Average of three a night.

Does Pat-P go with you?

Pat-P: Before I got pregnant (*She's three months pregnant*).

What do you do when you're in a wake?

I normally go during the last night *dahil doon ang pinakamaraming tao. Siyempre,* when you go there, you would want to meet the family of the dead person, his friends *at 'yung nakikiramay na rin.* I go straight to the immediate family and condole with them. Then I say a little prayer in front of the coffin. Then I give *abuloy.*

You do?

I also gauge it. *Minsan, mayaman pa sa akin 'yung namatayan.* Sometimes, I send Mass cards or flowers.

What will you not do for politics?

Compromise my principles and use people.

What will make you get out of politics?

I've had death threats, I wasn't really daunted. If I lose, that means people don't want me anymore.

What if you lose or you're cheated?

I don't believe that — *natalo ka dahil dinaya ka*? If you lose, that means you didn't do your homework. If you're in the political arena, you should know everything. You should study it, be able to counter it or neutralize it.

What if you don't win?

Then I'll be a private citizen. But I think I'm going to be a good campaign manager in the future. I may not be a candidate anymore, but I can run a campaign and be the man behind.

You have a career option?

Oo naman. I run so many businesses.

What's your highest political ambition?

Be mayor of Quezon City and just be senator for one term and leave a legacy. Aiming for the presidency... that needs divine intervention. You don't ask for it.

If you become a senator and you do well and people like you, there'll be a clamor for you to run for president. If you love the people, they will love you back.

Are you loyal?

To my friends, yes. To Pat-P I've been loyal and even to my political friends.

What if Pat-P asks you to leave politics?

She will not do that.

What was the wildest thing you've done?

I had many girlfriends in the past. Pat-P knows that. We've known each other since high school. She's from St. Paul's, I'm from Ateneo. *Ka*-soiree *nila kami.* Girlfriend *siya noon ng* best friend *ko.*

Have you mellowed as far as girls are concerned?

I think so. But I still get attracted to girls.

What attracts you first to a girl?

The face, *'yung maamo ang mukha.* She doesn't have to be sexy. Even if she's plump, *kung maganda ang* face, okay *sa 'kin.*

What do you think is Pat-P's biggest asset?

Her cheerfulness. She can also carry any conversation with anyone.

Who's brighter?

(Pat-P): I think he's brighter, book-wise. *Ako 'yung* street-wise. He's more intelligent. He's always in the honor roll. *Ako mas* smart.

(Mike): Actually, in my family, I'm the only one who was always in the honor roll. Even my only brother got kicked out of Ateneo and went to La Salle. My sisters had to go through about 10 schools before they graduated.

They said I am a blue baby, menopausal baby, because my mom gave birth to me when she was 40.

When you were 20 years younger, did anybody tell you that you could be a movie star?

Oh yeah. I was in second year high school in Ateneo, I was 15 and (movie director and producer) Joey Gosiengfiao was getting me as a Regal baby. That was after Gabby (Concepcion) and before William (Martinez).

You would have been a matinee idol.

But my mommy didn't like it. When I was younger and whiter, before I went diving, they said I looked like Aga (Muhlach).

But would you have wanted to be in show biz at that time?

Of course. In fact, I was even excited, because I knew Gabby and the others were making money. They had their own cars. I wanted to be like them, but my mom insisted that I finish my studies. She said if I wanted to be a movie star, she would not send me to school anymore. My mom, Corazon Foz-Planas, died in 1995, the day after I took my oath of office.

ANOTHER PLANAS/ A20

Another Planas in QC politics

(From page A19)

Are you related to (actress) Vivian Foz?

She's my second cousin.

What's your mom's nationality?

(Smiles) Ilocano. She was from Vigan, Ilocos Sur. My dad passed away in 1986, after I graduated from college. So I'm an orphan. I'm the youngest of six children.

(To Pat-P) How does it feel to have an orphan for a husband?

It's good because you don't have parents-in-law to deal with.

(To Pat-P) How do you deal with your stepchildren?

I don't. They're still too young.

You bite your nails. They say that's a sign of insecurity?

I guess so, but I don't really bite my nails. I make them even with my teeth. Maybe it's the perfectionist in me. When I cut my nails, I cut them at an angle. I'm just making them even with my teeth.

Are you conceited?

Pat-P: Yan pa. Nagbubuhat palagi 'yan ng bangko.

(To Pat-P) What's his biggest conceit?

Pat-P: Physical looks and his brains. He knows he's good-looking and bright.

To Mike: What's you weakness?

There are times I get tired in the campaign. Sometimes, I tell Pat-P, I feel like I want to give up.

What's your opportunity (from SWOT - strengths, weakness, opporunities and threats)?

Being incumbent for six years and being a Planas.

Threats?

Movie stars who are entering politics. That's why I always tell these legislators to read the amendments and make an appeal to amend the Constitution to revert to the two-party system.

Kahit artista ka, you still have to prove your worth. Ngayon, sa dami ng partido, 'pag may artista, kahit konting boto lang panalo na sila.

From the time I started in politics, I've always been with LDP. Same with my Tita Charito, sa Liberal Party siya. I never believe in butterflying, 'yung lilipat ka ng partido.

If you were a brand, what would you be?

If there's a product that's class-A but affordable, that's me. Maybe like ABS-CBN. People from all walks of life watch it.

What do you think is your downside?

Masyado akong totoo.

Is that bad?

In politics, it can work to your disadvantage. If I have an emotional outburst, it really shows, even during a campaign. Kung may ayaw kumamay sa akin and I'm extending my hand, I will ask him why. If he tells me, "Hindi kita gusto," then I'll tell him, "Hindi rin kita gusto."

Are you short-tempered?

There are times when I'm short-tempered, there are times when I'm full of patience. It depends on the situation.

Aside from going house to house, did you also dance and sing when you campaigned?

Yeah. You had to, because they wanted it, so I tried. At least, they gave me an "A" for effort.

What voter's request will you not give in to?

If they ask me to strip. (Laughs)

What if they ask you for money outright?

I will ask them first why. Kung malaki naman ang katawan, I will recommend him for a job instead of giving dole-outs.

What do you plan to do with the beggars in the city?

There are professional ones out there. I call them PBA (Professional Beggars Association). They move from one local government unit to another. That's against the law. They should be arrested. But, of course, due to the hard times, you wouldn't know whom to blame, the law enforcers or the beggars themselves.

Can a rich kid like you relate to the squatters?

Bakit naman hindi? I don't think I would win if I cannot relate to them. Sa akin, pare-pareho 'yan. Even Pat-P, she's surprised because when I visit the barangays, I eat anything. But now that I'm on a diet, pinipili ko na. I don't eat carbohydrates.

Why are you on a diet?

I'm trying to lose weight so that I'll be more agile in the campaign.

How else are you preparing for the campaign?

For the past two elections, I've always been my own campaign manager. I'm one person who knows my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. But now, my mother-in-law (newspaper editor and TV talk show host Jullie Yap Daza) volunteered to be my campaign manager.

We spent Christmas Eve in Tagaytay and Pat-P went there ahead of us, so I had to fetch Mommy Julie at Manila Standard. We were two hours inside the car. It was bonding galore. That same night, I was able to convince her that I'd make a good candidate for vice mayor. So she offered to be my campaign manager.

How much of Julie is in Pat-P?

Pat-P is Pat-P. Maybe in terms of good PR, they're the same. Pero sa ugali, magkaiba sila. Pat-P is very giving.

(Pat-P): Are you saying kuripot ang mommy ko?

(Mike): Wala akong sinasabing ganyan.

What do you expect Pat-P to do for you?

Fund raisers. I can't really expect her to campaign because she's pregnant.

What does your aunt (Charito Planas) advise you?

She never gave me any advice. The way I see her, although she's the sister of my father, lahat 'yan pulitika. Maybe that's the way I feel because I didn't grow up with her. But I think we're having lunch soon. She was the one who called for it. I don't know what's the agenda.

What's your favorite designer brand?

Faconable, in shirts.

Who influences you in your fashion?

(Pat-P): I go with him because he's color blind. I have to choose the shirt for him.

Why does your mom (Julie Yap-Daza) like Mike?

(Pat-P): Because she likes his name, Michael. That's her favorite guardian angel. My brother is Michael. She has a grandson who is Michael. The boyfriend of my sister is Michael. If ever, she'll have two sons-in-law named Michael. Their birthdays are just a day apart. June 15 and mom ko and Mike is June 16.

What do you plan to name your baby?

If it's a boy, maybe Severino, after my dad. His nickname was Seve, like the golfer. If it's a girl, of course I'll say Michelle, Francesca, after my name. My full name is Michael Francisco.

If your life were made into a movie, who would you like to play Mike Planas?

Aga Muhlach.

Who would play Pat-P?

(Pat-P): Charlene (Gonzales).

Country safe for tourists, says PTA chief

PHILIPPINE Tourism Authority general manager Nixon Kua yesterday assured foreign tourists that the Philippines remains a safe destination for them to visit despite the bomb blasts that rocked Metro Manila last Saturday.

"These incidents are truly deplorable but what is important is that the authorities are vigorously pursuing their leads and are on track to apprehend those responsible," Kua said in an interview.

"The safety and security of all visitors to the country is our highest priority."

Kua noted that the tourism community was busy preparing for the Lunar New Year celebrations later this month, which traditionally attract Chinese tourists to the country.

Airlines have added flights while hotels have cleared rooms for the holidays, which start around the weekend of Jan. 20-21 and climax on Lunar New Year's Day on Jan. 24, according to Kua.

"The country, especially the Filipino-Chinese community, is all geared up for this event and everybody is looking forward to welcoming visitors from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan," he said.

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1. All cash prizes can be redeemed from any PLDT Business Office and Provincial Exchange, nationwide.
2. Only the winning scratch cards with PLDT-authenticated security codes will be honored. PLDT will verify the authenticity of the winning scratch cards pursuant to its list of security codes. This list is also issued to and deposited with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The DTI representative shall be called to attest the authenticity of the winning scratch card, if necessary. Winners will have to present the winning "Scratch to Riches" scratch card, a valid picture ID (e.g. employee ID, passport or driver's license) to the PLDT Business Office or Provincial Exchange manager. Winners will be given a waiver form which they should accomplish and sign, waiving any further claim they may have from PLDT. The accomplished waiver form should be presented to PLDT upon claiming of the check representing the cash prize. The check can be claimed after five (5) working days upon presentation of the winning scratch card and other requirements to the same Business Office or Provincial Exchange.
3. Customers should present their winning scratch cards on or before April 1, 2001. Claims made after this date shall not be honored.
4. Employees of PLDT, its advertising and promo agencies, its suppliers for this particular promotion and participating dealer outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promotion and claiming the prizes therefore.
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No of Winners	Cash Prize	No. of winners per area
4	₱500,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
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Grand Draw

No of Winners	Cash Prize	No. of winners per area
4	₱1,000,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
4	₱500,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
10	₱100,000	4 in GMA, 2 in Luzon, 2 in Visayas, 2 in Mindanao
80	₱10,000	20 in GMA, 20 in Luzon, 20 in Visayas, 20 in Mindanao

2. Enclose a used P200, P300, or P500 denomination, or a combination of two (2) P100 PLDT Fonkard Plus or Touch Card with an expiry date from September 2000 onwards in a white envelope with the customer's name, address, phone no. and signature on it. Drop it in drop boxes placed in PLDT Business Offices, Provincial Exchanges and authorized dealers.
3. There will be two raffle draws: the preliminary draw will be on Jan. 6, 2001, and the grand draw will be on Feb. 10, 2001. Venue and the time of the draws will be submitted to DTI, announced and published in major dailies at a later date. Entries submitted from Nov. 27, 2000 to Dec. 31, 2000 shall qualify for the preliminary draw. Non-winning entries from the preliminary draw automatically qualify for the grand raffle draw, plus all incoming entries till Jan 31, 2001. They will be segregated according to the following locations: Greater Manila Area, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.
4. Winners in the preliminary draw shall automatically be disqualified in the final draw.
5. In cases where the winner's name is drawn more than once within the same raffle date, he will get the prize of higher value. The winner however, shall not be allowed to get both prizes.

Claiming of Prizes:

1. Winners shall be notified via registered mail. All prizes of the winners of the grand raffle draw can be claimed at the PLDT Main Office, 3/F Ramon Cojuangco Bldg. Makati Ave., cor. De La Rosa St., Makati City. In claiming their prizes, winners should present a valid picture ID (e.g. employee ID, passport or driver's license) to the PLDT Marketing Services Department. PLDT shall give them a waiver form that they have to fill up and sign. The accomplished waiver form should be presented to PLDT upon claiming of the check representing the prize. The check can be claimed after five (5) working days upon submission of the requirements to the Marketing Services Department.
2. Winners in the instant cash portion of the promo are still qualified for the raffle draw. Prizes for the raffle draw have to be redeemed within 60 days from the winner's receipt of notification through registered mail. Unclaimed prizes after the said date shall be forfeited with prior approval of DTI.
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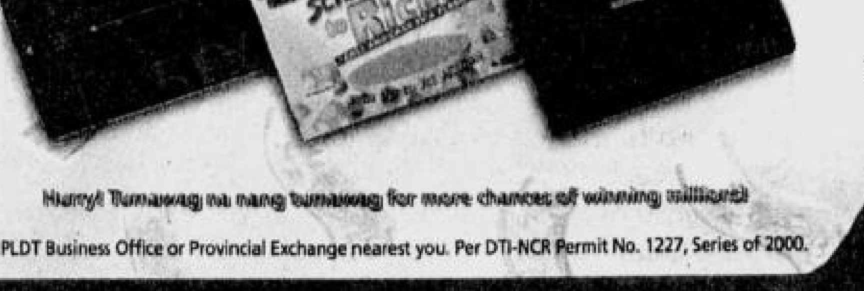

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Carmona landfill . . .

(From page A17)

He said these reports have been reaching his office following the continued refusal of the MMDA to reveal the location of its newest dumpsite.

The Cavite governor stressed that if the reports were true, then his administration would take the appropriate action. He said he would remain firm in his decision even if President Estrada ordered the reopening of the CSL.

Earlier, Greater Metro Manila Solid Waste Management Committee Chair Robert Aventajado said a temporary dump for Metro Manila had been found.

But he refused to say where the new dump is located, adding that the site would be announced later.

Antipolo residents have been closely monitoring the passage of garbage trucks on Marcos Highway since Aventajado formally closed the landfill on Dec. 31, said Porthos Alma Jose, president of the Federation of Homeowners' Association of Antipolo.

"We caught two trucks which attempted to dump garbage at dawn of Jan. 1, but we were able to send them back," Alma Jose said. "The driver told us the garbage came from Mandaluyong City."

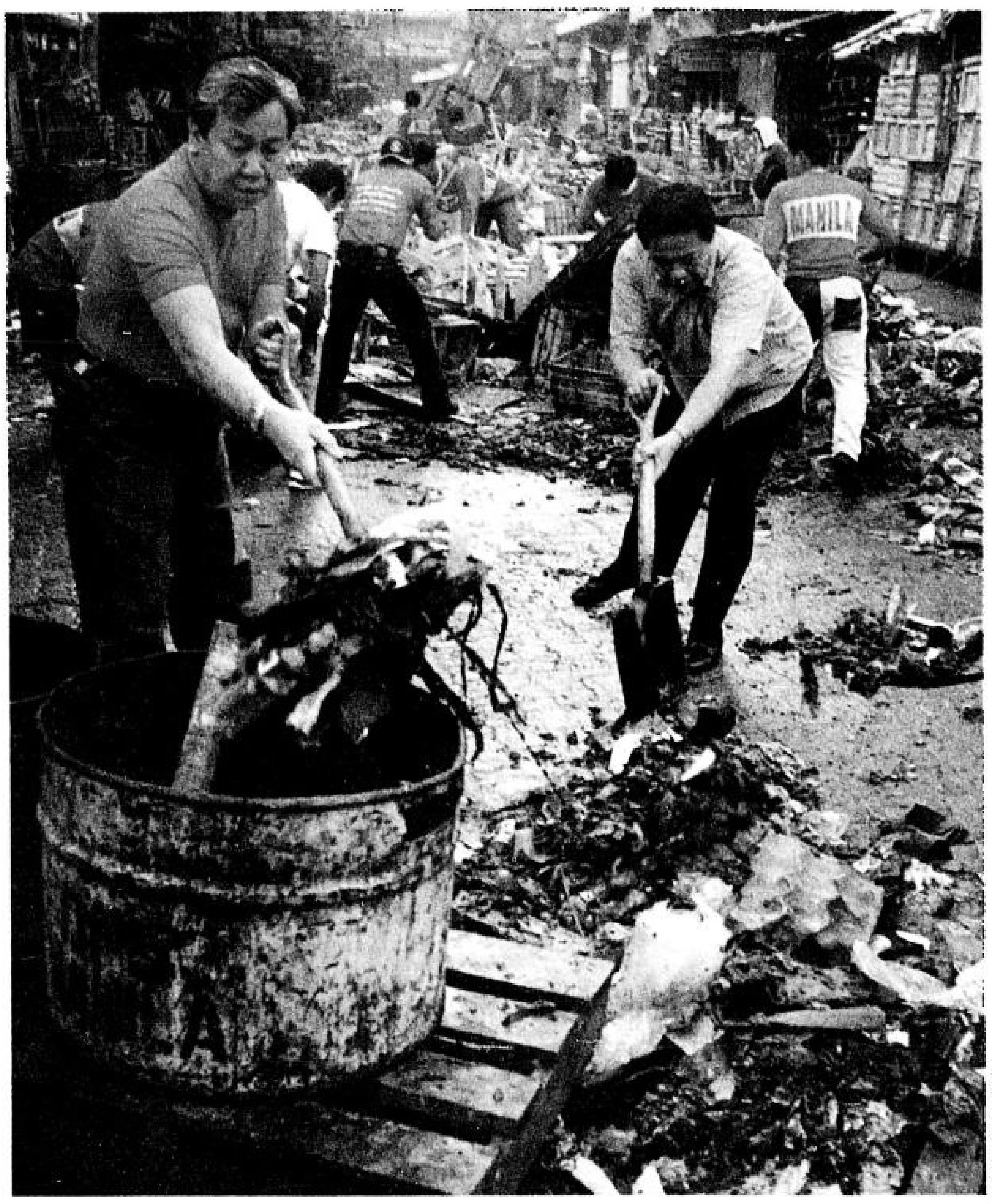
Another truck also reportedly left garbage in a poorly-lit area in Sitio Cabading in Barangay San Juan, in San Mateo, where the SMSL is situated.

"We don't want to make a big deal out of this," Alma Jose said. "As far as the Antipolo residents are concerned, the San Mateo landfill is officially closed. We'll just keep on being vigilant."

He said the group of homeowners also tasked its members to monitor the media statements of Aventajado, MMDA Chair Jejomar Binay and Rizal mayors.

Edith Regalado of the Citizens Committee on Landfill Closure appealed to the San Mateo local government to help scavengers who lost their livelihood following the landfill closure.

"For now at least, maybe the government could distribute rice and medicine to the families living within the vicinity of the landfill," Regalado said.



RANDY HORMILLOSA

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza and other City Hall officials join workers in cleaning up Divisoria.

A few days ago, a local court issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) against the opening and operation of the Semirara Island dumpsite in Caluya, Antique.

Aventajado said government lawyers are now trying to have the TRO lifted.

The plan to turn a portion of the 5,000-hectare Semirara Island in Antique into Metro Manila's wastebasket has met stiff opposition from the provincial and municipal governments.

Environmentalists also joined in the fray, saying the island is a marine and wildlife preserve and to dump garbage there would disturb the delicate balance that could lead to an ecological disaster in the province.

The opposition noted that the leachate from the dump could find its way to the famous island resort of Boracay in Aklan.

The SMSL was closed on Dec. 31 after a one-year extension. Rizal residents called for its closure citing health and environmental reasons.

Attempts to reopen the Carmona Sanitary Landfill in Cavite also failed following the protests of local residents and the municipal and provincial governments of Cavite.

The Carmona landfill was closed in 1998.

Bomb scare in QC

By Philip C. Tubeza and Cynthia D. Balana

A BOMB scare yesterday hit Quezon City after a bus conductor found a discarded box at the back of his bus and staff members of a hospital reported an abandoned car suspiciously parked on the street in front of the hospital.

But the two discoveries turned out to be a dud.

According to SPO3 Christopher Marquez of the Central Police District Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team, the box found yesterday morning in the bus contained only noodles and pancakes. And the car parked in front of the hospital was eventually picked up by its owner.

Passengers of the BBL Transit bus (NYL 473) were the box was found panicked after the conductor found the box.

Police said the bus was cruising on the northbound lane of Edsa when the conductor noticed the box under a seat at the back of the bus about 9:30 a.m.

Driver Romeo de los Santos parked the bus in front of the Department of Interior and Local Government building and told the passengers, who numbered about 10, to quickly get o ff the bus.

De los then asked for police help to determine if there was a bomb inside the box.

Marquez, who lead the SWAT team, said they did not find a bomb inside the box 10 minutes after they arrived at the scene.

"There were only noodles and pancake ingredients inside," Marquez said.

As the box was being taken to the SWAT office in Camp Karingal, the SWAT team then went to the Quirino Labor Hospital.

Members of the hospital staff had reported a car (NDK 785) parked on Katipunan Avenue in front of the hospital.

But police did not find a bomb inside the vehicle and its owner arrived shortly to take his car.

"Fortunately prank callers have not taken advantage of the bombings," Marquez said. "I hope they won't because we have to respond to every bomb threat."

Also yesterday, the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas hit the government's decision to deploy Marines in malls and other public places as a result of the bombings on Saturday.

The KMP in a statement accused President Estrada of "instigating an open fascist dictatorship without any formal declaration of martial law or a state of emergency."

It said the series of bombings and the deployment of Marines was a clear display of Mr. Estrada's "fascist acts."

"This only shows that Estrada can no longer rule the old way and resorting to fascism is an inherent character of Estrada's dying regime," said KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos.

"What's next? A crackdown on the anti-Estrada movement? Even one of the world's notorious dictators, Marcos himself, who tied our hands, sent us behind bars and killed thousands of people, failed to silence the people's movement and was eventually toppled by the people."

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3522, Series of 2000

Hard judges and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

EMCEE: The entries tonight are so good, the judges must be having a tough time picking the winners!

Co-emcee: Yes, they must be hard!

(Huh?)

* * *

Host: I heard you tried acting onstage for the first time last month. How was it—enjoy *ka ba*?

Starlet: Well, *iba siya, e. Mahirap pala umarte as entablado—lalo na kung* live!

(*Patay.*)

* * *

Host: what a great gimmick, huh? All the big celebrities are here!

Cohost: Yes, it's so exciting! What a pity!

(*Ano day*?— Tagalugin mo na kasi . . .)

* * *

Host: So, you're married now?

Guest: Yeah, but only civil *lang*. But it's okay *na rin*, although it's not sanctified by the Catholic Church.

(Sanctified?!)

* * *

Host: Surprise, our special guest is here!

Cohost: Oh? I thought he couldn't make it because he was sick?

Host: Yeah, but he's so professional *talaga, kaya* he still made it, *kahit hindi raw medyo maganda ang kanyang karamdaman ngayon*!

(*Karamdaman*? *Maganda*? What are you talking about?)

* * *

Host: I hear you've been offered some bold roles.

Starlet: Yeah, but I turned them down.

Host: Oh, really? Can you tell us why?

Starlet: Not for anything, but for me it's too much, *hindi ko kaya*. It's virtually tantamount to prostitution!

(Virtually *na*, tantamount *pa*!)

* * *

Host: Have you been watching the impeachment trial on TV?

Guest: Oh yes, it's so exciting. But it's also *nakakapagod*.

Host: What do you mean?

Guest: Well, the legalistic, it's so legalistic, then the surprise witnesses, it's so unexpected, we must pay very attention!

(Wheee!)

* * *

Host: What do you do when you hear people criticizing you?

Guest: I tell them in the eye!

(Huh?)

* * *

Host: What can you say about the controversy of the vote tabulation in the US elections, particularly in the important state of Florida? It's so complicated!

Guest: No, actually, it's very simple. It all boils down to the machine did not red the vote!

(*Ano daw*?)

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8	DOLBY SURROUND	SUGATANG PUSO
9	DOLBY SURROUND	PING LACSON STORY
10	DOLBY SURROUND	DEATH ROW
11	DOLBY SURROUND	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
12	DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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4	DTS	DEATH ROW
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6	DOLBY SURROUND	PING LACSON STORY
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7	ULTRA SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	SUGATANG PUSO
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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SPIRIT WARRIORS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	PING LACSON STORY
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TANDEM-1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-2	NAGHUHUMIYAW
TIMES	KAILANGAN KO'Y IKAW / BIYAHENG LANGIT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
ACT-2	IKAW LAMANG
ACT-3	CLASS AGAIN
ACT-4	KAAGAW
CORONET-2	DEATH ROW
QUEZON-1	DEATH ROW
REMAR	TANGING YAMAN
REMAR-2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
CUBAO	
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CINEMA-8	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
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CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-12	PING LACSON STORY
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LORES	
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POWER PLANT CINEMA	
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2 MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY	2 MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 TANGING YAMAN in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 DEATH ROW in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 DEATH ROW in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 SUGATANG PUSO	3 SPIRIT WARRIORS THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 SPIRIT WARRIORS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	3 MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 TANGING YAMAN	4 SUGATANG PUSO in DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film		4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage	4 SPIRIT WARRIORS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
				5 TANGING YAMAN in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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MOVIE GUIDE

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5	TANGING YAMAN
6	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS
8	DEATH ROW
9	PING LACSON STORY
10	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3 (DTS)	PING LACSON STORY
4	DEATH ROW
5	TANGING YAMAN
6 (DTS)	SUGATANG PUSO

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	TANGING YAMAN
3	PING LACSON STORY

Masagana CINEMA V
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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	DEATH ROW
3	PING LACSON STORY

starmall Movies
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2	PING LACSON STORY
3	TANGING YAMAN
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5	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	PING LACSON STORY
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	TANGING YAMAN
4	DEATH ROW
5	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS
7	PING LACSON STORY
8	TANGING YAMAN

Uniwide Metromall
(Los Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074

1	NAKALIMOT NA PAG-IBIG
2	BIYAK NA GUBAT
3	PING LACSON STORY
4	DROGA
5	TANGING YAMAN
6	DEATH ROW

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152

1	PING LACSSON STORY
2	AKO ANG LALAGOT
3	RATRATAN
4	TATLONG PUSO

Center Plaza Cinema
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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	CHARLIE'S ANGELS

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1	TANGING YAMAN
2	PING LACSON STORY
3	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY

Spring
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1	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
A	SPIRIT WARRIORS

JC Cinema
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GOTESCO CINEMA

City
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6	SUGATANG PUSO
7	TANGING YAMAN
8	PING LACSON STORY
9	DEATH ROW

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	PING LACSON STORY
4	TANGING YAMAN
5	
6	

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

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3	DEATH ROW
4	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
5	PING LACSON STORY
6	TANGING YAMAN
7	PING LACSON STORY
8	TANGING YAMAN
9	SUGATANG PUSO

Commonwealth
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1	SUGATANG PUSO
2	DEATH ROW
3	TANGING YAMAN
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS
5	PING LACSON STORY
6	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS
8	PING LACSON STORY

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	DEATH ROW
2	SUGATANG PUSO
3 (DTS)	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS
5	TANGING YAMAN
6	PING LACSON STORY
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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Sampaquita
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Dilson	PING LACSON STORY
Lords	SUGATANG PUSO
Jennet	PING LACSON STORY

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
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1	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	TANGING YAMAN
4	PING LACSON STORY

Prima
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1	
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Super Cinerama
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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	DEATH ROW
3	SUGATANG PUSO
4	PING LACSON STORY
5	TANGING YAMAN

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	PING LACSON STORY
3	TANGING YAMAN
4	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
5	SUGATANG PUSO
6	DEATH ROW

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	PING LACSON STORY
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
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1	TANGING YAMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	PING LACSON STORY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	PING LACSON STORY
2	TANGING YAMAN
3	DEATH ROW
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	PING LACSON STORY
3	DEATH ROW
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7232

1	PING LACSON STORY
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
4	DEATH ROW
5	TANGING YAMAN

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	DEATH ROW

Olivarez Los Baños
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1	DEATH ROW
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	TANGING YAMAN

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.03.1

1	PING LACSON STORY
2	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
3	TANGING YAMAN

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	PING LACSON STORY
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	SUGATANG PUSO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783

1	DEATH ROW
2	TANGING YAMAN

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	DEATH ROW

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SUGATANG PUSO
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	TANGING YAMAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
2	PING LACSON STORY
3	DEATH ROW
4	TANGING YAMAN

Berma
tel 679.2168

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	PING LACSON STORY

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	PING LACSON STORY
2	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
3	SUGATANG PUSO
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	DEATH ROW
2	TANGING YAMAN
3	PING LACSON STORY
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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

ROMERO AND GUILLEN

One's flawless, the other's razor-sharp

BY EMMIE G. VELARDE

WHEN I grow up, I'd like to be Gloria Romero. I mean, exactly like Gloria Romero, the embodiment of cool as she made her way onstage Wednesday night to collect the Best Actress trophy, patting her stunning red-lace top in place.

WITHOUT ego, Laurice Guillen handles every scene with absolute care.

'IDOL' Gloria Romero enjoys a moment that mortals only dream about.

I'd like to claim a reward, like she did, for the role of a lifetime, maybe as a mother, a friend, or a professional. And I'd like to claim it at a time when even my peers—no, especially my peers— wish it for me. There is no tougher jury than this, or one more generous once convinced of a colleague's worth.

Star Cinema's "Tanging Yaman," winningest entry in this year's Metro Manila Film Festival, gave the venerable Ms Romero such a moment as mortals like myself only dream about. But it is mortals like myself before whom Ms Romero and company stripped themselves of real-life identities and put on the personalities of, well, mortals like many others we know—old, landed family short on cash (except one), long on history and festering with concealed hurts.

The story is thus familiar on many counts. When it is said to be good, it must really mean viewers are familiar with, or hear about, people in the very same circumstances, and that yes, definitely, conflicts such as these should be resolved exactly the way they were dealt with onscreen. Because it is frequently told, such a story may put off viewers looking for innovation or new direction in local movies.

On the other hand, it is a widely tested formula for appreciation, numberwise.

What did the competition in was that Star Cinema's entry was handled in all aspects—directing, acting, writing, musical scoring—with finely honed skills and utmost respect, a combination often outside local movie industry norms. Better yet, such a respect for material was successfully translated into respect for the viewer, something that is not always guaranteed.

Its own reward

After the awards ceremonies, a TV newscast described Best Actor Johnny Delgado as a "surprise" winner.

Who was surprised, I wonder? Not me, and not any of my immediate relatives or friends, who otherwise march to different drummers.

Delgado as a reformed bohemian who squandered his inheritance long ago (a character as old as the Bible itself) is totally relaxed and convincing. I dare say this is possible only with: 1) full and intelligent understanding of the role, 2) the staying hand of competence backed with experience, and 3) little or no desire to play the part with an eye on a trophy.

In short, for true actors of this caliber, each role chosen with both head and heart is its own reward.

One other nominee, Eric Quizon in "Markova: Comfort Gay," who embraced his fully bloomed half-maiden character with manifest affection, satisfies these requirements, too.

The happy fact is, Delgado does not stand out among the "Tanging Yaman" players; rather, his work pulls and keeps together several fiery performances, much in the same way that his character, weak on the surface, binds the others with the strength of patience and forgiveness—give or take a few outbursts.

I hazard another observation: The only reason the movie did not bag Best Supporting Actress as well was that Dina Bonnevie and/or Hilda Koronel competed in another category.

Despair and dignity

As for Ms Romero, my newest "idol," I am sure even Lorna Tolentino, amply armed with a wonderfully mature and multi-layered portrayal in "Sugatang Puso," did not mind losing in the Best Actress race.

Romero is flawless as a widow caught between bickering grownup children and, in her spare time, warding off the ravages of Alzheimer's disease. She tackles the role with equal parts of bewilderment, despair and dignity. Try that on a less seasoned artist.

Not to invalidate my wish for when I reach Ms Romero's ripe golden age: In my next life, I wouldn't mind being someone like Director Laurice Guillen. Her instincts are razor-sharp, but her hand is light. Realizations are never rammed down the viewer's throat, but rather coaxed gently, so that these are accepted without resistance or ridicule.

She handles every scene with absolute care, but her pacing is crisp. The central character's epiphanies occur with dazzling brilliance, twice literally—as when Lola/Mama faints during Holy Communion and when she intuits the return of a grandson earlier feared dead.

Family!

Why, even a delicate miracle scene is executed with a sense of wonder, not unlike an unquestioning child's, so that it turns out less an overpowering experience than a pure, fluid transition from death back to life. Why not, indeed?

Finally, it helps that Guillen's personal goal with this project is crystal clear. What, in fact, is every person's "*tanging yaman*," in this case meaning "singular and exceptional treasure"? The movie says, family!

For a while I thought she would drive at the jackpot: unconditional, boundless love, love without malice or prejudice, love that knows no name, face and form except that of God and, therefore, applicable and dispensable to everyone that anyone comes in contact with. After all, this is the gist of the religious song that the movie is based on.

Maybe next time. Guillen conducted herself thoroughly without ego on this one; she is quite clearly fit to take her apparent mission to the next level.

OPENS JANUARY 12
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DEATH ROW 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00	SUGATANG PUSO 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
TANGING YAMAN 1:35, 3:45, 6:00, 8:20	SPIRIT WARRIORS 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	TANGING YAMAN 12:45, 2:55, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00

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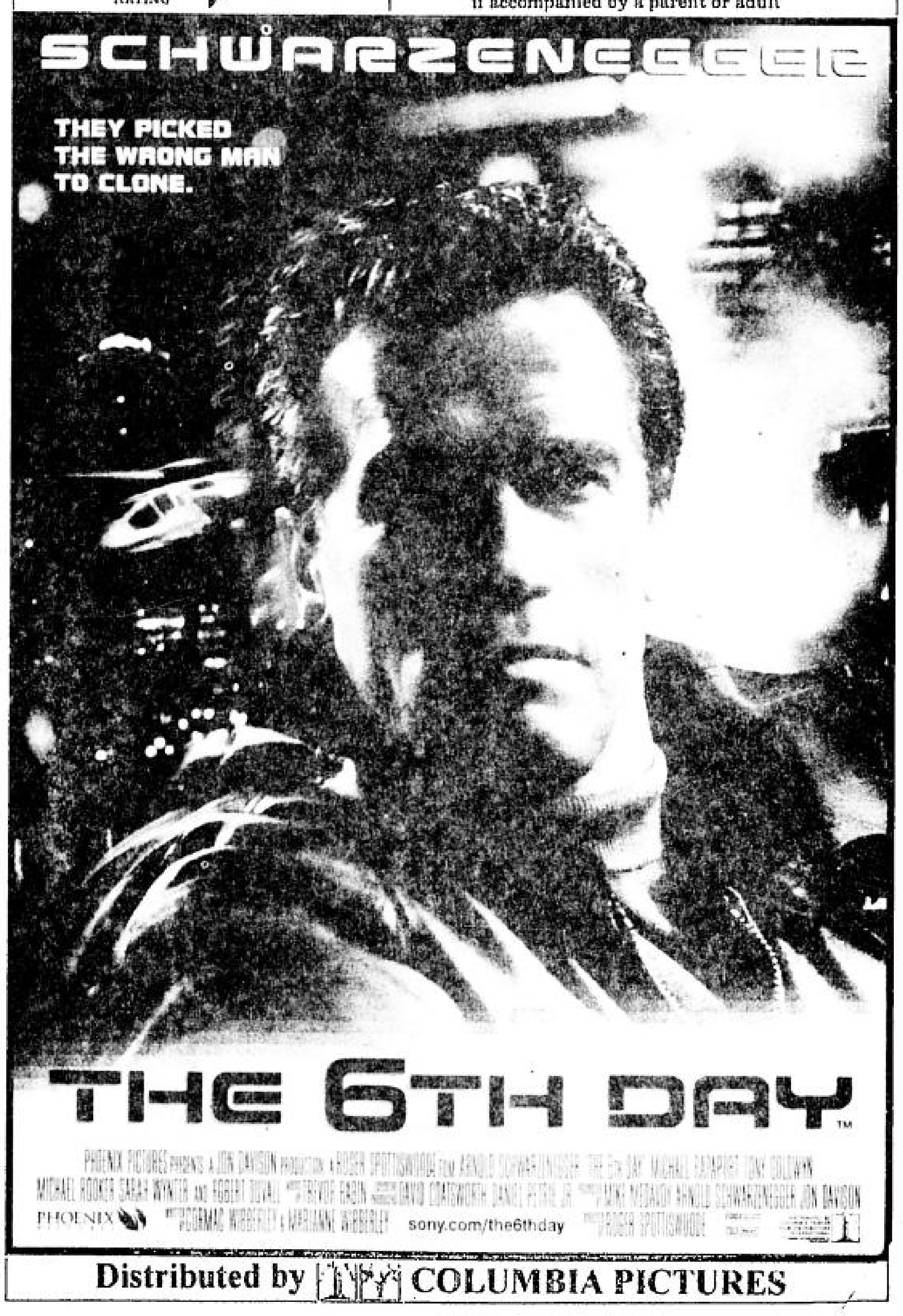

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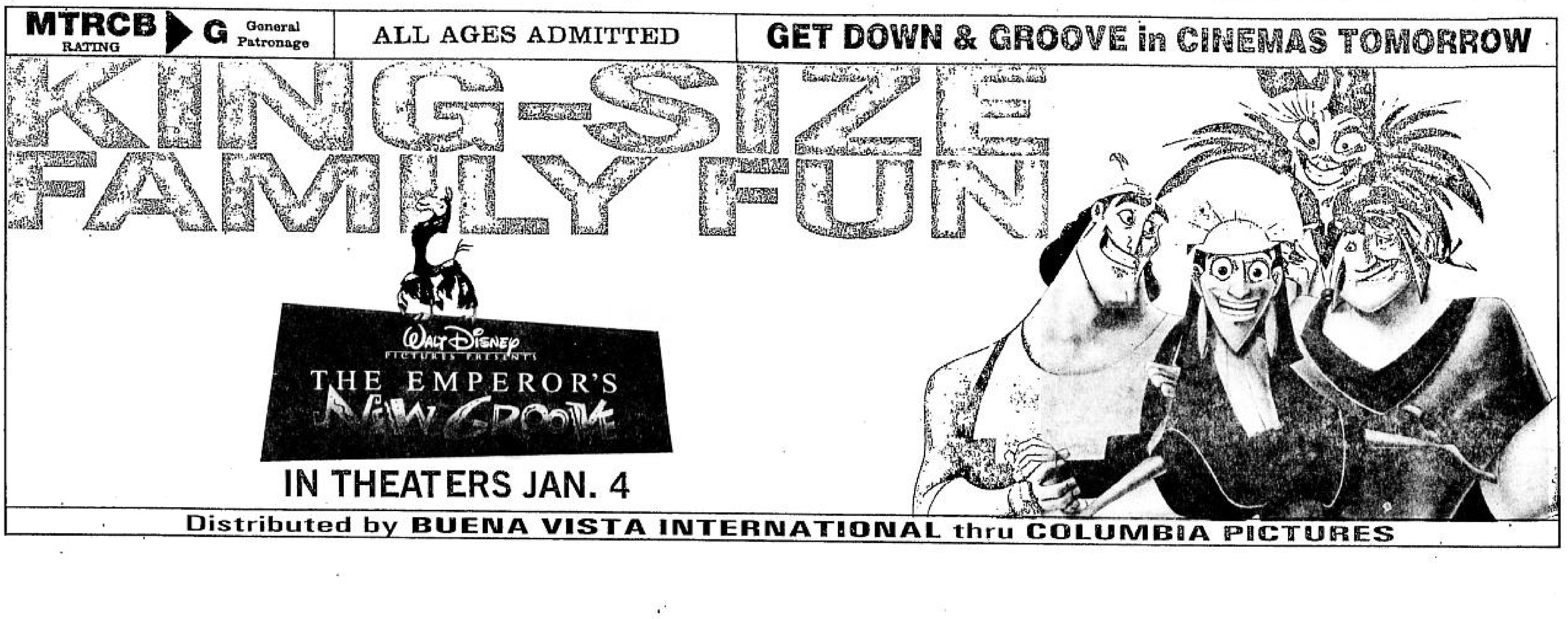

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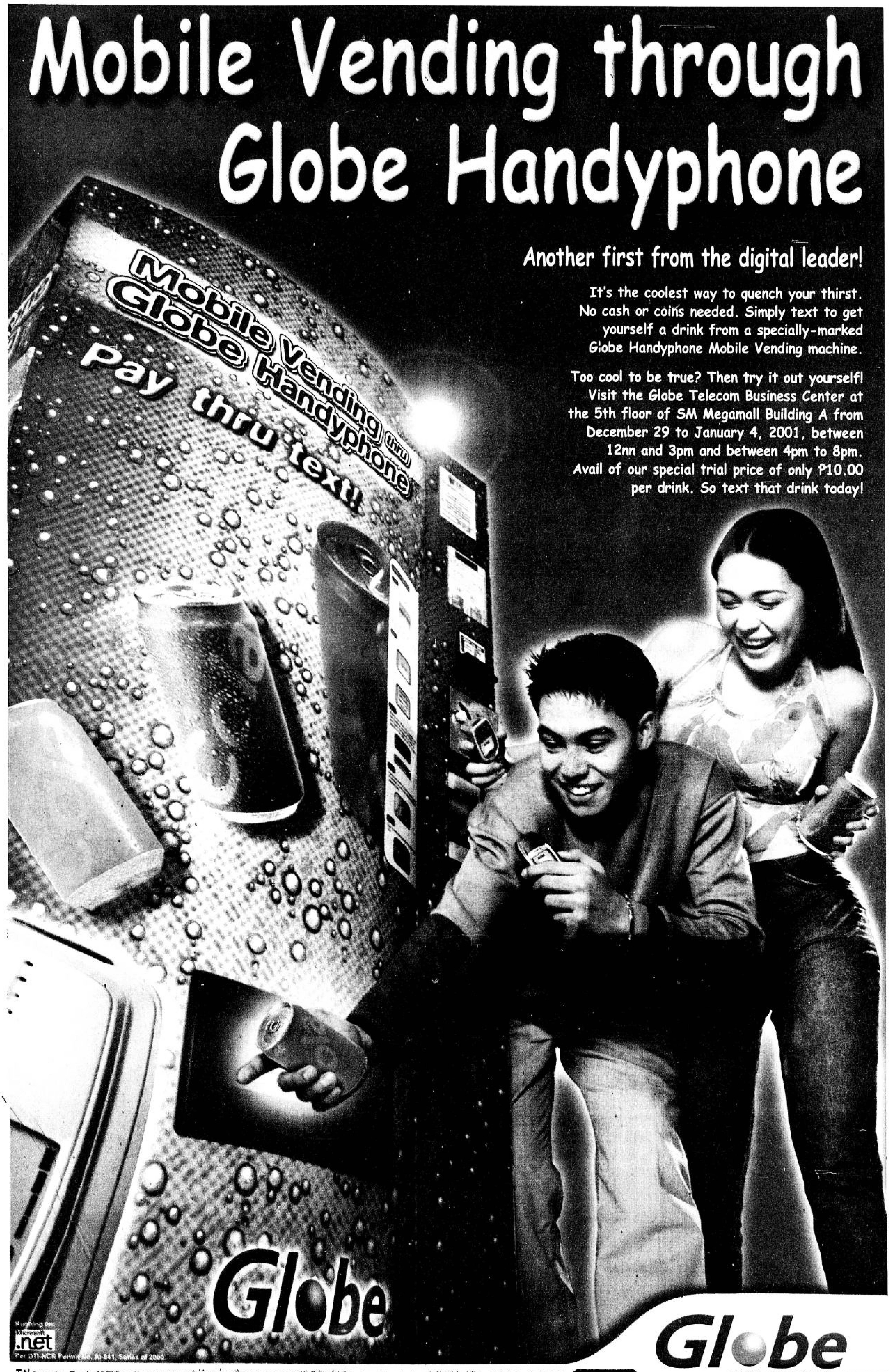
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. AI-841, Series of 2000

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BSP rates cut still likely despite peso fall

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said the peso's tumble to new lows yesterday would not deter its plan to cut overnight rates on Thursday.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, however, said that while there was still "some room" to cut rates further in the near term, the central bank could not bring down the rates to "pre-juetengate" levels of 11 percent for overnight borrowings and 13.25 percent for overnight lending as sought by some sectors.

Buenaventura said the BSP would go easy in bringing down overnight rates this year.

"Over time, I still think we can bring down our rates to 12 percent gradually," he added.

The peso fell by as much as 5.5 percent to 52.75 to the dollar in offshore markets yesterday after five bombs rocked Manila on Saturday in the worst violence to hit the capital in more than a decade.

Buenaventura said the peso's slide was a temporary overreaction to the weekend violence. He said he does not see any need for the central bank to buy pesos to defend the currency or for the central bank to rethink its rate strategy.

"There will be no impact on our decision because this is only temporary," he told Bloomberg News by phone. "It is based on emotional reaction rather than economic fundamentals."

The central bank last week left key interest rates unchanged for a second straight week, though it hinted it might cut rates when the Monetary Board meets this Thursday.

The central bank's key overnight borrowing rate stands at 13.5 percent and the benchmark lending rate at 15.75 percent.

Policy-makers lowered rates by 1.5 percentage points in December after increasing them four points in October to defend the currency after corruption allegations against President Estrada sent the peso to record lows.

Higher rates have been blamed for choking off investment and spending in an economy already battered by declining exports.

Mr. Estrada's impeachment trial in the Senate, which began in early December, resumed yesterday after a holiday recess.

Meantime, the 91-day treasury bill rate slid to 12.883 percent from 12.931 percent in the last auction last year.

National Treasurer Leonor Briones said the bureau was planning to increase the volume of the instrument to P2 billion from the current P1 billion as the treasury sees the demand shifting to shorter-term government securities.

Briones said the volume of the 182-day and 364-day treasury bills would decline to P1 billion weekly from the current P1.5 billion.

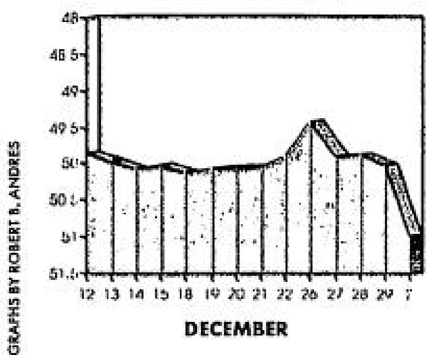
The government borrows P4 billion weekly from the private sector through treasury bills and another P3 billion weekly through the issuance of treasury bonds.

With a report from Bloomberg

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



Peso-Dollar Rate

P51.00 = $1

As of 5 p.m.,
Jan. 2, 2000

¥114.90 = $1

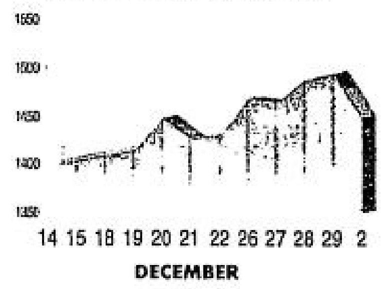
The US dollar was trading at 114.90 as of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 29, 2000

GOLD:$273.20/273.50

per ounce Hong Kong,
Jan. 2, 2000

STOCK MARKET

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Market down

STOCKS plunged yesterday with the main index losing 3.08 percent as investors dumped holdings on worries about the political situation following the spate of bombings in Manila last weekend, traders said.

They added, however, that investor interest was extremely muted with most players taking a wait-and-see attitude ahead of further testimony in the impeachment trial of President Estrada which resumed at 2 p.m. yesterday.

The composite index closed down 46.01 points, or 3.08 percent, at 1,448.49. The index shed 30.2 percent of its value last year. *Reuters*

Mark-to-market system postponed

THE SECURITIES Clearing Corp. of the Philippines, the clearing arm of the Philippine Stock Exchange, has asked the Securities and Exchange Commission for more time to implement a mark-to-market collateralization system.

The SCCP said it would use the extra time to look for an insurance company that would provide the surety bond to cover for the negative exposure of stock brokerage firms.

The PSE earlier proposed to the SEC a mark-to-market collateralization deposit system wherein stockbrokers will have to come up with additional collateral or assets to cover for stock transactions that are worth at least P5 million more than the available collateral of the brokerage house.

Ad sector grows 20%

THE COUNTRY'S advertising industry grew by nearly 20 percent in the first three quarters last year, with total advertising expenditures increasing to P44.2 billion, the latest ACNielsen AdEx figures showed. However, ACNielsen, in a statement, said this might be due mostly to inflation rather than real growth as the total spots and inserts placed during the first three quarters were slightly less than that of the same period in 1999.

Overall, there was no change among the top three advertising industry sectors. Telecommunications remained at the top with P3.28 billion, hair care products ranked second with considerable growth of 43.5 percent to P2.9 billion, and food products (other than biscuits and bakeshops) held on to the third with P2.13 billion.

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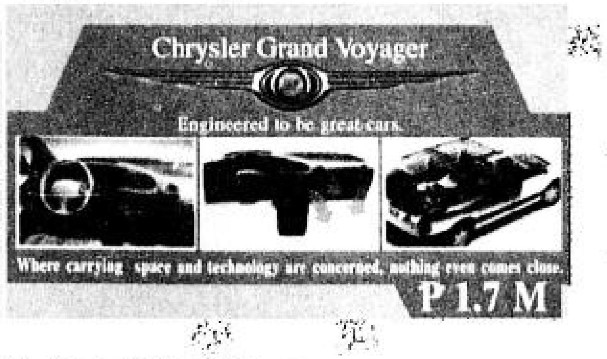
P 3.2 M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P 1.7 M

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Equitable PCI BANK
BPI FAMILY BANK
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CHINABANK CHINA BANKING CORPORATION
METROBANK

CHRYSLER GRAND VOYAGER

Downpayment		12 months		24 months		48 months	
		AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly
20%	340,000	7.08%	121,358	18.79%	67,315	45.67%	41,274
50%	850,000	4.62%	74,106	16.07%	41,109	42.33%	25,205

JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE

Downpayment		12 months		24 months		48 months	
		AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly
20%	640,000	6.82%	227,883	18.51%	126,411	45.32%	77,504
50%	1,600,000	4.21%	138,947	15.62%	77,080	41.78%	47,260

DODGE DURANGO

Downpayment		12 months		24 months		48 months	
		AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly
20%	540,000	6.02%	190,836	17.62%	105,858	44.23%	64,904
50%	1,350,000	2.93%	115,797	14.19%	64,232	40.03%	39,384

*Attractive rates also available for other downpayment financing period schemes.
**Subject to bank financing approval.

Mandaluyong: 503 Boni Ave., corner San Rafael Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila. Tel. Nos. 531-90-75 to 79 / 534-19-65 / 534-19-92 to 93 Fax No. 532-33-98. **Makati:** 2214 Chino Roces Ave. Makati City, Metro Manila. Tel. Nos. 840-09-01 to 02/04/23. Fax No. 816-29-68. **Bacolod:** Araneta St., Singcang, Bacolod City. Tel. Nos. (034) 435-02-21 to 23. Fax No. (034) 433-03-30. **Cebu:** A.S. Fortuna St., Mandaue City, Cebu. Tel. Nos. (032) 345-69-19 to 20. Fax No. (032) 345-69-10. **Iloilo:** Tabucsuba Jaro, Iloilo. Tel.No. (033) 329-09-16 Fax No. (033) 329-09-15. **Davao:** F. Bangoy St., Agdao, Davao City. Tel. Nos. (082) 224-14-34 to 35.

Per DTI-NCR permit no. 3430 series of 2000

Global Bank sells AB Card

By Doris C. Dumlao

GLOBAL Business Bank has the sale of its 100-percent stake in AB Card Corp. to Unibancard Corp. (Unicard), the credit card subsidiary of its parent bank Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., for P97.13 million.

Global Business Bank spokesperson Renato Fernandez told the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that the bank had executed a deed of absolute sale conveying to Unicard its entire shareholdings equivalent to 10 million common shares in AB Card.

The commercial bank subsidiary of the country's biggest banking conglomerate is currently consolidating its assets and raising P2 billion in fresh capital through an additional stock rights offering.

The sale of its entire holdings in AB Card was approved by Global Bank's board in early August this year.

Metrobank, in turn, plans to fold AB Card, which was originally owned by Asian Banking Corp., into Unicard in line with the consolidation of the group's assets.

Asian Bank was acquired by Metrobank and was merged with Global Bank as part of a plan to expand the latter.

Another commercial bank, Philippine Banking Corp., was also acquired earlier by Metrobank for the same purpose and its listing license would be used to provide a backdoor listing vehicle for Global Bank.

The P2-billion capital buildup planned by Global Bank is aimed at expanding the bank's operations and fund other possible acquisitions.

First Metro Investment Corp., the investment house subsidiary of Metrobank, will underwrite Global Bank's rights issue while Picazo Buyco Tan Fider and Santos is acting as the legal counsel for the rights offering.

The offer price will be based either on the average price of Global Bank stocks at the PSE for four weeks or on the book value of said shares, whichever is higher.

In line with the issuance of the new shares, Global Bank plans to apply with the PSE for the listing of the additional shares.

Equitable completes Bankard sale to RCBC

By Elena R. Torrijos

EQUITABLE PCIBank yesterday said it has consummated the sale of its 67-percent stake in publicly listed Bankard Inc. to RCBC Capital Corp., the investment arm of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. of the Yuchengco family.

In an interview, Equitable PCIBank president Wilfrido Vergara said the bank expected a net gain of P650 million from the transaction.

Equitable and RCBC Capital signed in May last year a share purchase agreement for the sale of the controlling Bankard stake for about P8 per share.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Equitable said that both parties "have completed the closing conditions pursuant to the terms of the share purchase agreement."

In line with the SPA, RCBC Capital will pay the capital gains tax because the sale was not executed through the PSE.

The Securities and Exchange Commission earlier denied the request of RCBC Capital for a special block sale of Bankard at the PSE.

RCBC was now asking Equitable to share part of the burden of the estimated P200-million capital gains tax, which was reportedly reduced when Bankard declared a P2 cash dividend prior to the sale.

The P650-million gain from the disposition of the Bankard stake is expected to help Equitable PCIBank reach the lower end of its P1.7 billion to P2.1 billion profit target for 2000.

Vergara said the profit target included the sale last November of the bank's 100-percent equity interest in PCIB Savings Bank to HSBC for a net gain of P450 million out of a gross of P1.1 billion.

He noted that the bank also counted on making about P500 million in recurring net income.

He said that the bank was still finalizing its targets for 2001 given that business conditions may not be realized as earlier expected.

However, he noted, the benefits of the merger in May 1998, such as cost savings, should have its full impact this year.

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED as directors of **BHI Holdings Inc.** were Manuel N. Tankiansee, Juanita U. Tan, Romulo A. Sigua, Jemie U. Tan, Miguel Ocampo-Tan, Emma Keng Ocampo-Tan, Rudin Gonzales, Marilou U. Pua, Brigido Dular Jr., Nemesio Ang and Remedios S. Balingit.

* * *

VICTORIAS Milling Co. Inc. clarified that Manuel B. Mañalac tendered his resignation as president and director of the company on Dec. 29, 2000 effective Jan. 31, 2001.

* * *

ELECTED as directors of **C&P Homes Inc.** were Sulficio O. Tagud Jr., Jerry M. Navarrete, Normita Q. Gimena, Rosario H. Javier, Marcelino C. Mendoza, Rowena S. Reciosado and Edgardo G. Santos.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Manila Broadcasting Co.** approved the debt equity conversion by **Elizalde Holdings Corp.** amounting to P170 million.

* * *

DIVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. disclosed that its subsidiary, **Hatchasia.com**, has deferred the sale of additional primary shares in Hatchasia.com to potential investors.

* * *

MATSUSHITA Electric Philippines Corp. said it has no information relating to the unusual movement in the trading of the company's shares on Dec. 29, 2000. *Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research*

Bank spreads expected to remain high

LOCAL banks, despite enjoying some of the highest net interest margins in the region, have little scope to reduce spreads in the near term given structural hurdles and the uncertain political and economic environment this year, analysts said.

Net interest margins, calculated as the average yield on assets minus average funding costs, were around 3.8 percentage points in the Philippines at the end of the third quarter compared to 3.46 percentage points in India, 3.2 in Malaysia, 2.58 in Thailand, 2.49 in Korea and 1.9 in Indonesia, one local banking analyst said.

With the central bank trimming overnight rates recently and the key benchmark 91-day T-bill rates following suit, there was a view that banks had scope to cut lending rates.

However, bank analysts told Reuters that there were several roadblocks in the way of near-term easing. Structurally, banks were constrained by reserve requirements that are relatively high by regional standards, they said.

Liquidity reserves were hiked by four percentage points in October after the peso fell sharply in the wake of corruption and bribery allegations against President Estrada, although the central bank has indicated it will reduce them in the new year.

Banks also have to contend with a legal mandate that obliges them to provide some funding to the agricultural sector, Bankers Association of the Philippines president Placido Mapa said.

A more critical issue was the danger of offering funds cheaply at a time when there was a high risk that many could turn bad amid projections of a worsening economy in 2001, GK Goh Securities (Philippines) Inc. bank analyst Leni de la Rosa said.

"Banks want quality loans and given the erratic movements in exchange rates and interest rates they would not want to sacrifice asset quality just to get more loans."

Mapa agreed. "If you have more funds to lend but not enough good borrowers, you would rather not lend."

BANK/ B4

Elizalde ups stake in MBC

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ELIZALDE group has increased its equity stake in publicly listed Manila Broadcasting Co., one of the country's largest radio operators, by 40 percent through a debt-to-equity conversion deal.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, MBC radio spokesperson Julio Macuja II said the board allowed Elizalde Holdings Corp. to convert P170 million worth of loans granted to the radio operator into equity.

Prior to the debt-to-equity conversion, Elizalde Holdings held approximately 20 percent stake in MBC radio while another affiliate, Elizalde Land Inc., owned at least 40 percent. The increase in equity puts the Elizalde group closer to acquiring all of the shares in the radio network.

MBC radio is one of the country's oldest radio networks having been in operation for more than 60 years. It operates both on the AM and FM bands and recently expanded its service coverage to include remote areas.

MBC radio's five radio networks include dzRH, MBC Radio AM, MBC-FM, MBC-YES Radio and the MBC community radio network. The community radio network is the biggest among these networks with at least 100 stations under its wing.

Each station generates almost all its revenues from advertisements placed by businesses in the community, where operations are tailored to meet the needs of the area serviced.

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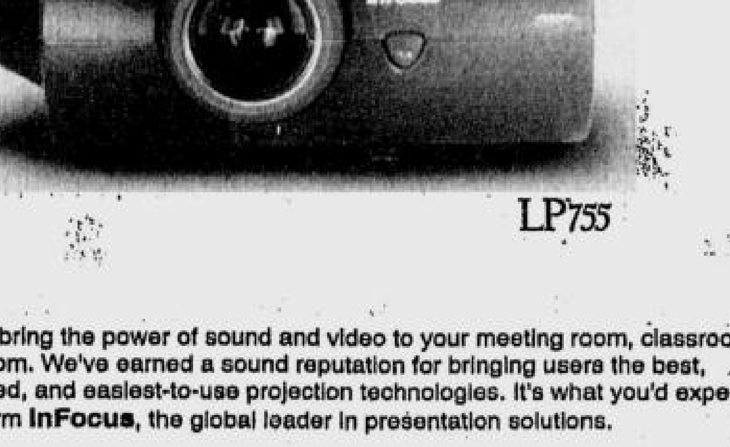

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, January 2, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	56.00	56.5	56	56	176,900
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	18.00	18	18	18	6,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	56.00	56	55.5	55.5	5,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	180.0	183	179	180	141,560
Philippine National Bank	36.00	36	36	36	1,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	32.00	32	28	28.5	3,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	45,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1540	1565	1540	1565	5,010
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	250,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1310	1335	1305	1330	29,470
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	.4300	.43	.42	.43	270,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	685.0	685	660	660	18,530
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	.4500	.45	.44	.44	60,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4.00	4	4	4	50,000
Piltel	.5400	.56	.53	.56	120,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	835.0	860	835	855	30,900
Ivantage Corp.	.9400	.94	.89	.9	230,000
Philweb.com Inc.	.0400	.04	.036	.039	89,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. "B"	48.00	48	46.5	46.5	895,900
Petron Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.12	1.14	3,953,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	.9200	.92	.92	.92	330,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l SV	.7500	.75	.73	.74	3,020,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	.7100	.71	.71	.71	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	9.50	9.6	9.5	9.6	30,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	29.50	30	28	30	36,800
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.56	46,000
RFM Corp.	.9500	1	.95	1	1,390,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	47.50	48.5	47.5	48.5	117,900
San Miguel Corp. "B"	54.00	54.5	53	54.5	710,300
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg "A"	.4700	.47	.47	.47	10,000
Ayala Corp.	7.30	7.3	7.2	7.2	2,271,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.30	1.3	1.3	1.3	5,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	13.25	13.5	12.25	12.5	2,500
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.10	2.12	2.1	2.12	55,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	5,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	.2900	.29	.29	.29	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.70	2.75	2.7	2.75	2,123,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	.6600	.66	.66	.66	1,440,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	20.50	20.5	20.5	20.5	24,900
Global Equities Inc.	.3300	.33	.33	.33	250,000
Ionics Inc.	14.75	15	14.75	15	358,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	113,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A"	.0110	.011	.011	.011	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	.7600	.77	.76	.76	310,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	.5700	.57	.53	.53	2,980,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	.4800	.49	.47	.48	9,480,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	.3400	.35	.34	.35	2,130,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	.6600	.72	.66	.72	90,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.40	1.4	1.4	1.4	35,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.20	6.2	6.2	6.2	10,000
Music Corp.	2.80	2.8	2.7	2.8	76,000
Picop Resources Inc.	.1100	.11	.11	.11	100,000
Philippine Seven Corp.	6.80	6.8	6.8	6.8	2,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	7.50	7.7	7.5	7.7	72,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	.6900	.69	.6	.6	20,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.7400	.76	.73	.75	1,080,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	.3900	.39	.39	.39	640,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	48.00	48.5	48	48	424,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.90	2.9	2.8	2.8	33,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (PDR)	670.0	670	670	670	2,000
Jollibee Warrants	9.20	9.2	9.2	9.2	4,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	3,700
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.00	5.2	5	5.2	8,972,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	.2900	.3	.29	.3	160,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.1900	.19	.19	.19	1,010,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.3000	.3	.29	.3	4,800,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.28	1.3	1.26	1.28	4,902,000
Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	.0700	.07	.07	.07	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	.1400	.15	.13	.15	1,180,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	.1350	.135	.135	.135	1,800,000
SM Development Corp.	.7900	.79	.79	.79	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.50	5.5	5.3	5.5	7,801,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	.0825	.0825	.0825	.0825	100,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	.0050	.005	.005	.005	1,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	.0050	.005	.005	.005	6,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	.0046	.0046	.0046	.0046	2,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.50	2.5	2.5	2.5	16,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "A"	.1900	.19	.19	.19	30,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "B"	.1950	.195	.195	.195	100,000
Omico Corp.	.0036	.0036	.0036	.0036	79,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. "B"	.2400	.24	.24	.24	1,200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	.0210	.021	.02	.02	3,500,000
Interport Res.	.0050	.005	.005	.005	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0042	.0042	.004	.0042	40,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "B"	.0042	.0042	.0042	.0042	5,000,000
Pacifica	.0130	.013	.013	.013	1,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	.3000	.3	.3	.3	10,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	665,140	83,204,550.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	125,989,930	199,157,215.00
PRO	30,835,000	96,437,070.00
Mining	89,346,000	681,800.00
OIL	50,510,000	280,200.00
GRAND TOTALS:	297,346,070	379,760,835.00

AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	530.14	DOWN23.94
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,046.58	DOWN57.96
PRO	485.57	DOWN22.60
Mining	1,220.94	DOWN24.14
OIL	1.71	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	830.39	UP0.46
Composite	1,448.49	DOWN46.01

NO. OF ADVANCES: 6; NO. OF DECLINES: 63; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 20;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 89; NO. OF TRADES: 2,208

CURRENCIES

Jan. 2, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.060558	1.000000	49.9860
Japan	Yen	0.009274	0.008744	0.4371
United Kingdom	Pound	1.586913	1.496300	74.7941
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.135982	0.128217	6.4091
Switzerland	Franc	0.658609	0.621002	31.0414
Canada	Dollar	0.708172	0.667735	33.3774
Singapore	Dollar	0.611978	0.577034	28.8436
Australia	Dollar	0.589789	0.556112	27.7978
Bahrain	Dinar	2.813300	2.652661	132.5959
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.282816	0.266667	13.3296
Brunei	Dollar	0.610921	0.576037	28.7938
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000110	0.000104	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.024465	0.023068	1.1531
UAE	Dirham	0.288784	0.272294	13.6109
Korea	Won	0.000840	0.000792	0.0396
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.942900	47.1318
Germany	Deutsch	0.511292	0.482097	24.0981
France	Franc	0.152450	0.143744	7.1862
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.427869	21.3875
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.068523	3.4252
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.023374	1.1684
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000487	0.0243
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.158584	7.9270
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004703	0.2351
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005667	0.2833
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.023374	1.1684
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.197236	59.8450

Go-bbledygook

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

INSTEAD of hiring Romulo Mabanta law offices of the bank's new anti-Erap chair, Ricardo Romulo, recently resigned Equitable PCI Bank chair George Go has opted to hire Accra as counsel for his scheduled testimony at the Senate impeachment hearings.

This should give an indication as to the kind of political testimony Go would offer should he be finally put on the witness stand.

For those who were born yesterday, Accra is the home base of Erap running mate, now agriculture secretary, Edgardo Angara, although the law firm was also the longtime home of disgusted Erap ally Sen. Franklin Drilon.

After being asked to relinquish the chairmanship of the bank by his own brothers and sisters, Go has gone into seclusion during the holidays, not even returning phone calls from supposed close friends.

According to the grapevine, Go has also hired a new set of bodyguards, foreign-led and trained in VIP protection and counter-terrorism measures.

Go, incidentally, has yet to deny the prosecution allegation that he summoned Equitable chief trust officer Clarissa Ocampo right in the office of Erap lawyer Estelito Mendoza on Dec. 13 (that number again!) to plug loopholes in crucial "Jose Velarde" documents.

Islamic riddle

EVEN on a simple issue as to the date of its creation, Malacañang and the Estrada lawyers could not agree as to exactly when the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation was supposed to have been established.

Based on the incorporation papers filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the scholarship foundation was organized in early 2000.

But a check with the official Joseph Estrada website, www.erap.com, reveals a different story altogether.

According to an Estrada website report, "Quo Vadis, Philippines?" (the title alone suggests the report to have been written by someone with an academic/legal background), a scholarship program for Muslim students had already been established within the first six months of the Estrada administration.

"Furthermore, President Estrada has already set up a scholarship program for 100 of the best and the brightest Muslim college students," was the exact testimonial of the 1998 yearender report.

One of the incorporators/directors of the Muslim foundation, UP Prof. Mila Reforma, has also admitted to being a vice president of Topwin Securities until she abruptly resigned in November, when presidential mistresses suddenly became Page One item alongside "Juetengate."

From a former bottom-dweller, Topwin Securities has become a favored stockbrokerage by no less than SSS Chair Carlos Arellano himself, living up to its name and ratcheting to the top 10-20 circle on account of SSS-coursed trades.

Disadvantaged competition attribute Topwin's secret weapon to one of the so-called "EZ" ladies, ex-Maryknoller Mary Joyce Melendrez.

Short takes

- MA. ELENA Enriquez, an associate of the Romulo Mabanta law offices who has joined the prosecution team of Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo, was responsible for bringing in the Scotland Yard handwriting expert who analyzed the "Jose Velarde" signature.

The young lawyer, after all, has sleuthing in her blood; her family owns a security agency, the Enriquez Security Services Inc.

A graduate of the University of Santo Tomas, the young lawyer is not related, either by consanguinity or affinity, to one Laarni Enriquez.

- IN addition to PTV-4 covering the impeachment trial, Malacañang has also assigned two editorial writers from the Office of the Press Secretary and a lawyer from the Office of the Executive Secretary to attend the daily impeachment hearings.

Heard through the grapevine

THE AGGRESSIVE Fil-Estate Group has another environmental lawsuit ticking, this time over its dredging and bulldozing work in Caliraya Lake in Laguna that has dried up lakefront waters in some barangays.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	-	1,700,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,700,000
Baguio Country Club	700,000	800,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	80,000	90,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	130,000
Camp John Hay	300,000	400,000
Canlubang	850,000	900,000
Canyonwoods	-	400,000
Capitol Hills	115,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	2,030,000	2,300,000
Celebrity Sports Club	200,000	220,000
City Sports Club Cebu "A"	-	709,500
City Sports Club Cebu "B"	-	764,500
City Sports Club Cebu "C"	-	1,226,500
Club Filipino	-	330,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	260,000
Evercrest "A"	-	130,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	280,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	370,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	500,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	400,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	18,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	15,000,000
Manila Polo	2,600,000	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	800,000	850,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	850,000	920,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	200,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.)	Please Call	Please Call
Montemar (Corp.)	-	55,000
Montemar (Ind.)	-	40,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "B"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	Please Call
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	130,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	-	250,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sta. Elena "A"	-	1,900,000
Sta. Elena "B"	-	2,100,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.)	-	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.)	-	Please Call
Tagaytay Country Club	450,000	500,000
Tagaytay Highlands	1,050,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	850,000	900,000
Valle Verde (Ind)	160,000	-
Valley Golf	290,000	330,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	7,100,000	7,400,000

PLAYING RIGHTS

(Available Lessees)			
Manila Golf	450,000	Valle Verde	15,000
(Available Lessors)			
Alabang "A"	40,000	Mimosa Golf	20,000
Calatagan "A"	15,000	Orchard "A"	20,000
Canlubang	70,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	30,000	Sta. Elena	70,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	35,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	500,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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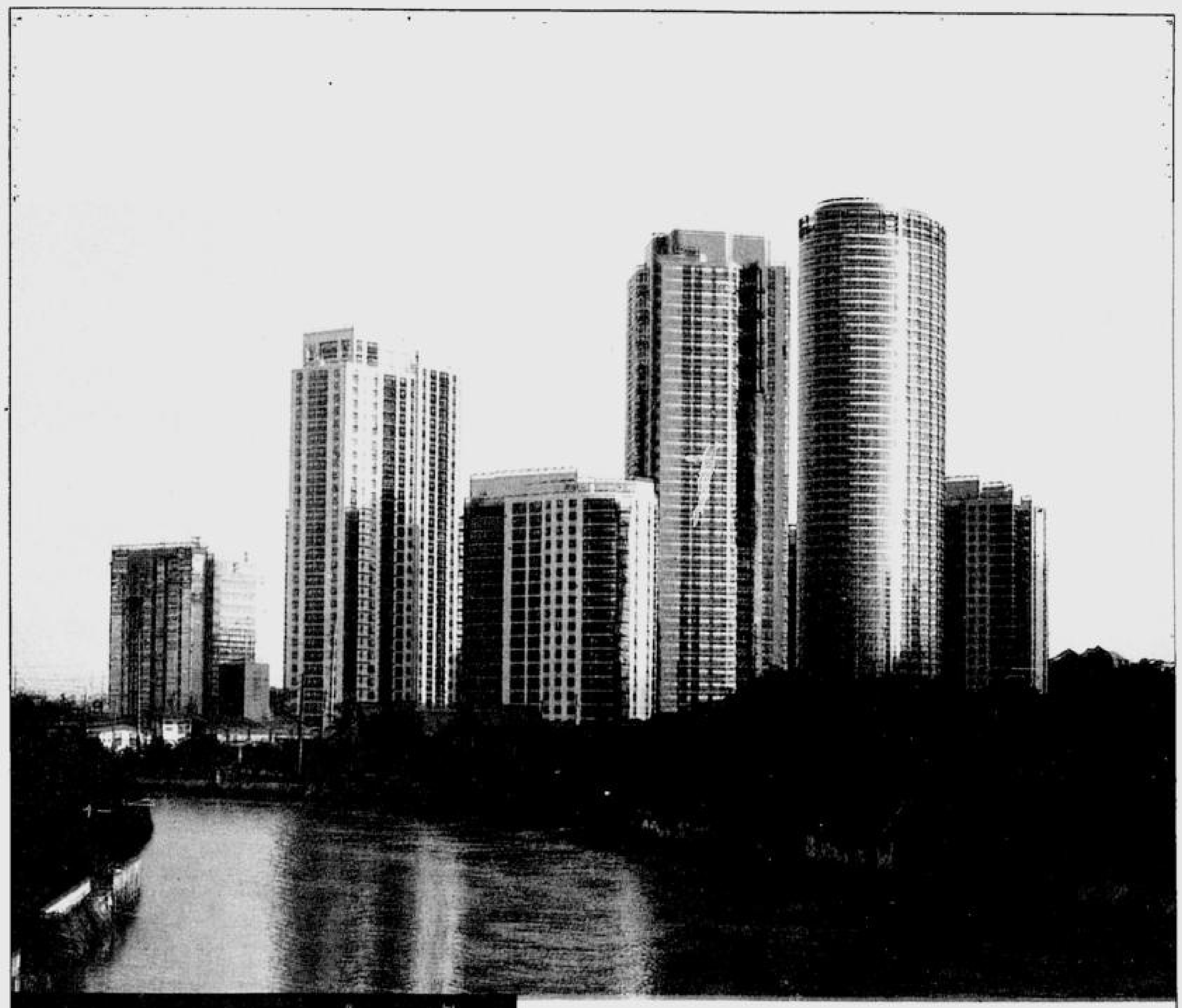
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Smart rapped for refusing to open network

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has suspended all pending applications for permits, licenses and authorizations of Smart Communications Inc. for refusing to open its network to Infocom Communications Network Inc.

The NTC said Smart failed to comply with an order it issued on Dec. 23, 1999 requiring Smart and Infocom to "equally share" their networks.

Smart is the country's No. 1 mobile phone company. Infocom provides trunk-radio services with a technology provided by Nextel Communications Inc.

"From the various motions filed by Smart after the commission issued the Dec. 23, 1999 order, it appears that Smart has no intention to abide by the said order," the NTC said.

It added: "This refusal was even made clearer by Smart's faxed letter to Infocom dated Sept. 9, 2000, wherein Smart imposed additional onerous conditions, such as payment of full airtime of P9.69 inclusive of FCA per minute, and P2,400 per trunk per month for the use of trunks that will interconnect their respective facilities as well as putting up by Infocom of a performance bond in the sum of P200 million."

These conditions, it said, "were not included in the order of Dec. 23, 1999."

On Jan. 14, 2000, Smart filed a motion asking the NTC to reconsider its Dec. 23, 1999 ruling. The commission junked Smart's appeal on Aug. 18, 2000, which it said was "final and can no longer be the subject of a motion to suspend proceedings."

"Wherefore, premises considered, the commission finds respondent Smart liable for violation of Section 2 and 6 of EO 59 and hereby imposes the following administrative penalty: Suspension of further action on all pending and future applications for permits, licenses or authorizations," the NTC ruled.

Smart has filed a motion asking the commission to reconsider its order.

Smart has been opposing Infocom's claim that it is entitled to airtime rates. It insists that Infocom, although its Nextel capabilities include mobile communication, is not a cellular mobile telephone service operator and is not entitled to airtime rates.

Infocom uses Nextel's iDEN (Integrated Digital Enhanced Network) technology, which allows its subscribers to use their units as a two-way radio, pager and cellular phone.

Though the company has no CMTS license, Infocom is offering mobile communication as a value-added service.

Forex swaps to be scrapped

CURRENCY deals known as engineered swap transactions, suspected of being used as a means to speculate against the peso last year, would be scrapped by June this year, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said commercial banks would have to phase out the transactions "within six months starting from Jan. 1."

At the end of this period, banks would no longer be able to use engineered swaps.

Engineered swaps are derivative transactions that involve clients buying dollars from foreign exchange corporations, usually subsidiaries of banks, which are then deposited in foreign currency deposit units of banks.

Simultaneously, these dollars are then sold to banks in the form of forward contracts.

These contracts are then consummated at a later date at a rate usually higher than the prevailing exchange rate.

For banks, engineered swaps are exempt from reserve requirement coverage, helping them reduce the level of funds they have to set aside for this purpose.

Traders have said engineered swaps give banks a cheaper means of obtaining funds for foreign exchange speculation.

The central bank issued a circular in November forbidding banks from entering into fresh swap deals following the steep decline of the peso last October.

It also proposed a three-month phase-out period for existing transactions, but this was not formalized. *Reuters*

PLDT divides fixed business into 5 units

By Anthony O. Alcantara

TELECOMMUNICATIONS giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. has split its fixed-line business into five groups.

The creation of five new units—Greater Metro Manila, Corporate, Regional, International and Inter-Carrier Business—"represents an enormous change in our corporate culture as we move to devolve more authority and responsibility to those staff who work more closely with our customers," PLDT president Manuel Pangilinan said in a statement issued yesterday.

Pangilinan said the five business units would report to PLDT executive vice president Ricardo Zarate, head of the company's fixed-line business.

The heads of these units—Alfredo Panlilio, Corporate; Eriberto Melliza, Regional; Conrado Hernandez, International; Ramon Santiago, Inter-Carrier; and, Ramon Rivera Jr., Greater Metro Manila—would be responsible for end-to-end services to customers, PLDT said in a statement.

"Their responsibilities include product delivery and services to satisfy customers, maximization of company assets and overall development of the fixed-line business," it said. "These new units will form the bedrock of the PLDT group in the coming years and will help us realize our goal of improving customer service levels, increasing our revenues, and building a platform for new businesses, products and services to evolve."

The Greater Metro Manila unit would manage and oversee PLDT's fixed-line operations in Metro Manila while the Regional unit would handle businesses outside the capital region, the company said.

JGC relocates to RP

JGC Corp., a major engineering company from Japan, is relocating its computer-related engineering, procurement and construction services from Japan to the Philippines.

JGC, through local subsidiary JGC Philippines Inc., is investing some P464 million to set up its engineering, procurement and construction services facilities here. Its operations at the Madrigal Business Park in Ayala Alabang will be linked directly to its Japanese headquarters through a leased-line facility with the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

JGC Philippines was formerly Technoserve International Co. Inc. until JGC firmed up its control of the company last year, JGC brought new technology and, together with its partner, Marubeni Corp. of Japan, invested P240 million into the company last year.

JGC's current engineering services include front-end engineering design, which covers the conduct of a feasibility study, basic design and budgetary cost estimation, and detailed engineering services that include process verification, piping, civil, mechanical, instrument and electrical works.*Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

91-day bill yield falls for 7th time

YIELDS on 91-day treasury bills fell for the seventh time at the government's sale of the securities yesterday, while the Bureau of Treasury rejected all bids for 182- and 364-day bills.

At the Bureau of Treasury auction, the average yield on the 91-day bill, which banks use to set lending rates, fell to 12.883 percent from 12.931 percent on Dec. 18, the last auction before a holiday break.

The Treasury was able to sell the full P1 billion on offer as investors submitted bids for P3.8 billion worth of debt.

The Treasury refused to sell 182- and 364-day bills as offers were few and high. There were P2.9 billion of bids for a total P3 billion of debt on offer.

The 182-day bill was at 14.724 percent at the last auction. The 364-day bill at 15.067 percent.

The Bureau of Treasury plans to increase the size of its weekly tenders of 91-day bills to P2 billion from the present P1 billion.

"We are discussing the possibility of increasing the offer size of 91-day T-bills to P2 billion from P1 billion," National Treasurer Leonor Briones told reporters after the weekly T-bill auction yesterday.

She also said the government was looking at the possibility of reducing the volume of its weekly 182- and 364-day bills to P1 billion each from the present P1.5 billion.

"(It's) because of the market's preference for short-term bills," Briones said, adding the Treasury would make the decision tomorrow.

Earlier, the Treasury fully awarded its P1-billion offer for 91-day bills at an average of 12.883 percent from the previous 12.931 percent. Banks submitted total tenders of P3.805 billion for the tenor.

The Treasury rejected all bids for 182-day and 364-day bills.

Traders said yields in government papers were going up by an average of 25 basis points in the secondary market in reaction to the bomb blasts that killed at least 14 people and wounded almost 100 on Saturday.

The first and biggest explosion occurred inside the front coach of a train on the LRT system. Bombs exploded in succession in a bus, a park bench near the US Embassy, a warehouse at the main airport and outside a luxury hotel.

President Estrada said he has placed the Armed Forces and the police on full alert. *Reuters*

A WOMAN counts US dollar bills inside a money exchange in Makati's financial district. The peso dropped to a record low of 52 early yesterday in what traders saw as a reaction to a spate of bombings in Metro Manila on Saturday.

REUTERS

Singapore GDP grows 10.5% in Q4

SINGAPORE—Singapore's economic growth slowed in the fourth quarter as economists said there were signs the boom in demand for computer components was easing.

Gross domestic product slipped to an annual 10.5 percent in the fourth quarter from 10.6 percent in the third quarter, the Ministry of Trade and Industry said in a preliminary report.

David Cohen, an economist with Standard & Poor's MMS International, said the figures suggest a 4.8-percent expansion in the fourth quarter from the third, down from 6.6 percent in the previous quarter. That was "consistent with the perception the trajectory of growth is slowing," he said.

Singapore and countries across Asia are bracing for faltering growth in the United States, which will pinch demand for the region's exports. Singapore expects growth to fall to between 5 percent and 7 percent this year from 10.1 percent in 2000.

"The situation in Singapore is not looking good," said Leslie Khoo, an economist with IFR. "There is no sign the electronics sector will turn corner in the near term."

Singapore's makers of electronics components are already feeling the effects of the US slowdown. Chartered Semiconductor Manufacturing Ltd., the world's No. 3 maker of custom chips, said recently it might cut its forecast for 2001 sales and profits after Dell Computer Corp. and IBM Corp. said they expected sales growth to moderate.

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said Sunday the economic outlook was "fair, but with some uncertainties." If the United States goes into a recession, "it will hurt Asia's growth, and Singapore's too," he said.

Goods-producing industries, which include manufacturing and construction, grew 12.4 percent in the fourth quarter from a year ago compared with 11.4 percent in the third period. The sector accounts for about one-quarter of GDP.

Services industries, which include retailing, tourism and financial services, expanded 8.6 percent from a year ago, lagging the third quarter's revised 9.3 percent. Services account for about one-third of GDP.

In all of 2000, goods-producing industries expanded 10.3 percent while services producing industries grew 9 percent.

This year, services are likely to drive growth, powered by the liberalization of the financial services and telecommunications industries, economists say.

About 43 percent of financial institutions surveyed in the third quarter said they expected better growth prospects, compared with 40 percent in the second quarter.

The preliminary GDP estimates are based primarily on data from October and November and are subject to revisions when more detailed figures become available.

The government will release details of the industrial performances, inflation, employment and productivity in the fourth quarter and in 2000 in mid-February. *Bloomberg*

Philcemcor seeks more time to file complaint

THE PHILIPPINE Cement Manufacturers Corp. is appealing to the Department of Trade and Industry for more time to file its amended anti-dumping complaint against Taiwan Cement Corp.

Trade Undersecretary Ernesto Ordoñez said yesterday he would discuss the local cement manufacturers' appeal for an extension of the deadline with acting Trade Secretary Thomas Aquino. Ordoñez did not disclose how much time Philcemcor was seeking.

Philcemcor has up to Friday to submit its amended complaint against Taiwan Cement.

Philcemcor was supposed to finalize its petition on Sept. 22 last year but the trade department granted the group a 90-day extension to gather more evidence to obtain harsher penalties against its nemesis.

DTI-Bureau of Import Standards director Alexander Arcilla said he was surprised why Philcemcor had not come up with its final petition because the longer it tarried on its complaint, the bigger the share of Taiwan Cement in the local market.

Philcemcor has decided to add to its petition the import data for the first half of last year that it hopes will lead to a substantial increase in the cash bond—computed as the difference between the prices of Taiwan Cement in Taiwan and in the Philippines—to be levied on Taiwan Cement.

Philcemcor claimed Taiwan Cement managed to build up a significant market share through unfair trade practices. It accused Taiwan Cement of selling cement at $20 per ton here versus its home price of $60 to $65 per ton in Taiwan. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Tyson Foods agrees to purchase IBP for $4.7B

SPRINGDALE, Arkansas—Tyson Foods Inc. has agreed to buy IBP Inc. for $4.7 billion in cash, stock and assumed debt, thwarting a bid by rival Smithfield Foods Inc. for control of the No. 1 US beef processor.

Tyson, the biggest US poultry producer, will pay $30 for each IBP share, about half in cash and half in stock. That is 12 percent more than IBP's closing share price Friday. Tyson also will assume about $1.5 billion in IBP debt and other obligations.

"The acquisition will make Tyson the biggest meat producer in the US by far," said Christine McCracken, an analyst at Midwest Research. "There will also be fewer regulatory concerns with this combination than if Smithfield had bought IBP."

The agreement came after a bidding war between Tyson and Smithfield, the United States' biggest pork processor. It was trying to become the dominant US meat company.

Smithfield said its latest offer of $32 a share in a stock-for-stock transaction exceeded Tyson's. Smithfield made its latest bid on Friday and sweetened it on Monday. The company said IBP did not respond to the offer, which expired at noon Monday.

"Our proposal was the best proposal for IBP shareholders," Smithfield chair and chief executive Joseph Luter said in a statement. "We are confident that over the next 12 months and beyond, the IBP shareholders will, in hindsight, conclude that our offer would have created superior value."

John Tyson, who became chair of his family's Springfield, Arkansas-based company last year, is seeking to turn IBP's meat business into a national brand the way Tyson did with chicken. IBP is the No. 2 US pork processor.

The combination of Tyson and Dakota Dunes, South Dakota-based IBP will create a company with more than $23 billion in revenue. Tyson said the purchase would add to earnings by more than 15 percent.

IBP would release further details of the transaction in a filing with the US Securities and Exchange Commission this week, said IBP spokesman Gary Mickelson.

The battle for IBP began in October after a group including management offered to buy IBP for $22.25 a share, or $3.8 billion in cash and debt. The group was led by Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette Inc., which had since been taken over by Credit Suisse First Boston.

On Nov. 13, Smithfield offered $4.1 billion in stock and assumed debt, or $25 a share, to gain IBP's pork business and a one-third share of the US beef market. Tyson topped that bid three weeks later. IBP, which had urged shareholders to wait for a better offer, asked both companies to submit new proposals by Saturday.

As part of the offer made for IBP last week, Tyson agreed to pay IBP a $70-million breakup fee if the proposed acquisition is derailed because of antitrust concerns.

"The regulators will look at this deal, but Tyson has very little overlap with IBP. They have very distinct businesses for the combination to be a big issue," McCracken said. "The Tyson-IBP combination is better in business and for management than a Smithfield-IBP union would have been. *Bloomberg*

Bank spreads . . .

(From page B2)

He said banks had reduced their lending rates as T-bill rates have eased in recent weeks but "room for more reductions will depend on the economic climate" going forward.

With the government indicating its plans to borrow more money locally to fund its projected budget deficit this year, banks would be wary of further upward pressure on benchmark rates that would threaten their ability to offer cheaper funds, De la Rosa said.

BNP Paribas Peregrine Securities Inc. research head and bank analyst Ed Buncod said there was always an argument that banks are quick to hike lending charges when rates rise but slow to raise interest rates on deposits.

However, he does not believe that Philippine banks are keeping spreads artificially wide.

"They are a function of the direction of interest rates . . . Spreads increase when (benchmark) rates head upwards."

He said that while banks made some windfall gains from high yields on government debt securities in the fourth quarter, they were also forced to hike their lending rates in line with the spike in borrowing costs and this would have negative consequences further down the line.

"In the longer term they will suffer a slowdown in business because people will be reluctant to borrow." *Reuters*

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CITY OF OLONGAPO
Office of the City Mayor

18 December 2000

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The City Government of Olongapo invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for furnishing the necessary design, labor, materials, equipment and services for the PROPOSED OLONGAPO CITY COMMERCIAL AND CULTURAL CENTER AT LOT 21 (PHASE I). The project calls for the construction of a three-storey bldg. with first class amenities of a modern mall that would have a total floor area of approximately 12,000 square meters and a leasable space of 8,400 square meters. **This building would be offered as a design and partial build project.** It shall be constructed in three phases with Phase I consisting of Full 3-storey design and partial construction of 400 square meters leasable space.

Interested bidders classified and registered with the Inter-Agency Committee on Registration and Classification of Contractors as at least "Medium A" on Building and prequalified by the Local PBAC are eligible to bid for this project. Experience on related projects is necessary.

Pre-C forms shall be made available to contractors classified above upon submittal of Letter of Intent and latest PCAB License on 05 January 2001 at the Office of the Chairman, PBAC, Olongapo City.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished prequalification statements shall not be later than 5.00 p.m. of **12 January 2001**. The Local PBAC shall notify in writing all prequalified and pre-disqualified contractors.

Bid/Tender documents are available for issuance by the PBAC Secretariat, Office of the City Mayor, Olongapo City to prequalified bidders upon payment of non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) per set starting 17 January 2001 at the City Treasurer's Office.

All bids from prequalified contractors must be submitted and received not later than 10:00 a.m. on **09 February 2001** at the Office of the Chairman, PBAC, this city after which time all bids will be publicly opened.

A pre-bid conference will be conducted on **23 January 2001**, at 10:00 a.m. at the City Council Session Hall, City Hall.

The City Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the City

(Sgd.) KATHERINE H. GORDON
City Mayor and PBAC Chairman

(PDI - Dec. 27, 2000 & Jan. 3, 2001)

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SMT PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR (Mobile Plant)

Qualifications:
- Male less than 35 years old
- Graduate of four (4) years business course
- Must have a feasible achievement in production improvement
- Familiar with MRP Quality Control Kit and SMT Operations
- At least 5 years experience in production management specifically on Computer Notebook Manufacturing

COMPONENT SUPERVISOR (Mobile Plant)

Qualifications:
- Male less than 35 years old
- A graduate of Engineering course major in Automatic Control
- Preferably can speak Chinese fluently
- Familiar with problem solving and failure analysis
- Must have 6 years experience in Computer Notebook Manufacturing

PRODUCT ENGINEERING SUPERVISOR (Mobile Plant)

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- Male less than 35 years old
- An Electronic Engineering graduate
- Must have a feasible achievement in production improvement
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INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Muscle mania

Q. How many muscles are there in the human body?

A. There are about 656 muscles in the body, although some authorities make this figure even as high as 850 muscles. No exact figure is available because there is disagreement over which are separate muscles and which ones slip off larger ones. Also, there is a wide variability from one person to another, though the general plan remains the same. Muscles are used in three body systems: the skeletal muscles move various parts of the body, are striped and striated fibers and are called voluntary muscles because the person controls their use; smooth muscles, found in the stomach and intestinal walls, vein and artery walls, and in various internal organs, are called involuntary muscles, and are not generally controlled by the person; cardiac muscles, or the heart muscles, contain striped and involuntary muscles.

For the Record. Why does excessive exercise cause muscles to become stiff and sore? If muscles worked too hard, the cells run out of oxygen. This starts a fermentation process that produces lactic acid. The build-up of lactic acid in the muscles causes the soreness and stiffness.

Classified Odd. In Vang, Norway, a group of professional thieves broke into a company at night, located the safe, and set up an explosive charge that would just blow the door of the safe off, enabling them to get to the money inside. After setting the fuse, they ran into the next room, crouched behind the wall, and waited for the explosion. It came a few seconds later. The safe door was blown off. So was the roof. In fact the entire building collapsed, trapping the robbers, still crouching in the next office, under the rubble. There had been one problem they hadn't foreseen: instead of money, the safe had been filled with dynamite.

WORD WATCH

Dinamita : ultimately, from the Greek *dynamis*, 'power.'

PDI -- January 3, 2001

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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

EDWARD TRINIDAD RAPATAN VIADO
"DING DONG"

March 18, 1969 - December 27, 2000

wish to convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all relatives and friends who condoled with us, showed love and concern in our moment of bereavement.

May God grant you abundant blessings for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."
Matthew 10:39

The College of the Holy Spirit at Mendiola, Manila
and the CHS Alumnae Foundation, Inc.
sadly announce the passing of

Beloved teacher and mentor

Consuelo Malacaman y Corteza

(Born February 14, 1914)
who peacefully joined her Creator on January 2, 2001

Known for her integrity, discipline and maternal care for her students, she leaves a legacy of Catholic ideals for Filipino womanhood, founded on Truth with Charity.

The CHS administration, faculty, alumnae, student body and non-academic personnel request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Schedule of services

January 3	7:30 p.m.	Requiem Mass*
January 4	7:30 p.m.	Requiem Mass and Necrological Services*
January 5	9:00 a.m.	Funeral Mass* followed by interment of her ashes at CHS Cemetery, Mendiola Manila

*Chapel of the Convent of the Holy Spirit, Poinsettia St., Quezon City

---

DOMINGO BENITEZ REDITO

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 1, 2001
at the age of 81.

His loving wife **Refugio Ribaya Redito**; children **Joselina**, **Rommel** and **Imelda**, **Magdalena** and **Medardo**, **Mariles**, **Perpetuo** and **Albina** (†); grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City until January 3, 2001.

Thereafter, it will be flown to Oas, Albay and interment will be on Sunday, January 7, 2001 after a 2 p.m. Mass.

DR. GREGORIO A. MORAL, JR.

Agosto 3, 1926 - Disyembre 29, 2000

Ang kaniyang maybahay **Rustica N. Lopez**; mga anak **Patrick Gerard**, **Maria Antonia** at **Allen Valencia**, **Vicente Paolo**, **Joseph**; mga apo **Martha Francesca** at **Miguel Antonio**; mga kapatid **Violeta** at **Arturo**; mga hipag at bayaw **Patrocinio**, **Rebecca**, **Clarita**, **Remedios** at **Roberto**, **Maria**, **Jose** at **Milagros**, **Justita**, **Amado** at **Aida**, **Matea**, **Rosario** at **Rosie** ay humihiling ng mga dasal sa ikapapayapa ng kaniyang kaluluwa.

Ang kaniyang mga labi ay kasalukuyang nahihimlay sa Santuario de San Jose, Buffalo Street, East Greenhills, Enero 5, 8:00 ng umaga Misa at Necrological Service sa Santissimo Rosario Parish ng Unibersidad ng Santo Tomas (UST). Makatapos nito ay ililipat ang mga labi sa Parokya ng Imakulada Concepcion, Naic, Cavite.

Enero 6, 2:00 ng hapon, banal na Misa at libing.

Sa halip ng mga bulaklak, ikasisiya ng yumao ang inyong pag-aabuloy sa Special Aid Grant for Indigent Patients (SAGIP), isang serbisyong kaniyang itinatag para sa mga may karamdamang nangangailangan.

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies;
and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

ARMANDO R. VILLACORTA

of Sta. Quiteria, Kaloocan City

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 01, 2001
at the age of 68.

His wife **Charito**; children **Trixie** and **Wilson**, **Vic** and **Merlin**, **Dong** and **Adelle**, **Ray** and **Gail**, **Peter** and **Bheng**, **Paul** and **Cecille**; together with grandchildren, sister, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Peter Memorial Chapels.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 06, 2001 at the Eternal Garden Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

MAXIMO F. DACANAY

2nd Lt. PC (Ret.)
of Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur

Peacefully joined our Lord on December 29, 2000
at the age of 78.

He is lovingly remembered by his loving wife **Priscilla**; children **Cely** and **Ed**, **Ben** and **Elsie**, **Camilo** and **Ester**, **Dodong**, **Beth** and **Doods** and **Glory**; grandchildren and other relatives.
His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz,
G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.
By January 4, 2001, 6 p.m. Mass
at Chapel C-11, Funeraria Paz.
Interment will be held on Friday, January 5, 2001
at the Heavens Gate Memorial Park, Antipolo,
Metro Manila, at 10:00 AM.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." *2 Cor. 5:8*

"Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love him."
1 Cor. 2:9

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People, Events & Products

REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC, Editor

The strong peso and other good memories on Philippine banking

JANUARY 1 was a significant date in the history of Philippine currency making, at least during the Spanish and American eras. It was the date printed on most of the paper currencies (bank notes) issued by El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2, the first bank in the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

The exceptions included the series for 1896, a year marked in Philippine history as the birth of the Philippine revolution against Spain. The batch of bank notes issued by the bank that year carried the issue date June 1 (which was some weeks before the start of the revolution spearheaded by the Katipunan) although, again, it was not the first time that the locally printed money bore a date other than January 1. The very first bank notes, in fact, were marked May 1, 1852, a date that coincided with the time when the first lending transactions were also effected by the bank.

'Strong pesos'

At that time, paper money in the Philippines was then collectively called pesos *fuertes*, which literally meant, in Spanish, "strong pesos." Indeed, they were strong in terms of value, for they could be redeemed in Mexican coins in gold or silver. Those that were issued after the first batches formalized this guaranty by bearing the following inscriptions on the face of the bank notes: *Pagadero en plata u oro menudo* (Payable in silver or subsidiary gold coin.)

Apart from carrying the name of the issuing bank, the bank notes also bore the portrait of the woman for whom the bank was named—Isabella II, the reigning queen of Spain when the bank was established.

The bank was founded in Manila (within what is now known as Intramuros) on Aug. 1, 1851 on the strength of a royal decree, but actual operations began almost a year later. The bank's authority to issue paper money also came from the Spanish royal government in Madrid, and antedated the currency issuing authority of the postwar Central Bank of the Philippines by about a hundred years. (The present central bank, the sole official issuer of Philippine currency, started operations only in 1949.)

In 1869, the name of the bank was officially shortened to El Banco Español Filipino as a result of the ouster of Queen Isabella in 1868, so all bank notes issued from then on carried the shortened name.

Bank renamed

In 1912, based on its new character under the American regime, the bank was renamed Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), although its long-time clients continued to call it by its Spanish equivalent, Banco de las Islas Filipinas. On Jan. 1 of that same year, the first batch of new bank notes issued by the bank took on an American bearing and texts on the money's face were printed in English. (In 1903, the bank notes came to be simply called "Philippine peso.")

A bank note from this new series is among those currently on exhibit at the head office lobby of BPI on Ayala Avenue in Makati City, which is dubbed "Be Part of BPI's History." The exhibit is part of the preparations for the celebration of the bank's 150th anniversary this year. The piece was contributed by Bernadette Jamerlan-Castellano of Iloilo city, whose bank note was passed on by relatives from earlier generations.

Two other notes issued eight years later, in 1920, were shared by Federico Guba and Cecille Abacan, while three others—all released in 1933—were contributed by Catherine Rose Santos, Jaime Ramos and Laarni Cheng. These peso notes are all dated January 1.

But the memorabilia showcase is not just about paper currencies. There is also a time deposit certificate denominated in pesos *fuertes* for the princely sum of 2,200, contributed by Veronica Tapia-Merk. The note, printed in Spanish and dated 6 *de Abril*, 1895, is 7 inches long and 4 inches wide. It bears the original signature of the manager of the bank at that time. Another contribution is a BPI payment order note dated 24 *de Abril*, 1912.

A similarly interesting piece included in the exhibit is a manager's check issued by the bank's Plaza Cervantes head office in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Dated Jan. 3, 1921, the check was placed in the name of Irene Villamarin, for encashment at the Banco Hispano Americano in Madrid, Spain. The check has been properly preserved and donated to the bank by Teresita Limquiaco.

Historical document

One major historical document is a large transaction record book of the old El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2, which contains in detail the voluminous transaction entries starting on May 10, 1855.

These entries are among the earliest records of banking transaction in Asia. The records have been well preserved and kept in their original format 17 inches long, 11-½ inches wide and one-a-half inches thick. All entries were written in Spanish and in beautiful longhand. The book itself is hardbound in thick cloth and secured at the corners by metal borders, indicating how well the early bankers in the Philippines treated bank records.

The transactions in this particular record book were significant because they were made at a time when the bank officially received from the Spanish central government the royal authority to issue paper money (bank notes) in the Philippine islands, that came to be known as pesos *fuertes*.

Another set of documents in the exhibit that has attracted public attention is that of transaction records originating in 1897. These were the first transactions of the Iloilo branch of El Banco Español Filipino. What makes them very historical is that they were the first transactions of the first branch of the first bank in Southeast Asia. The first entry was dated March 15, 1897. All entries, written in Spanish, were made in longhand and the penmanship of the one who did the entries was, by any standard, elegant.

The records are contained in two journals that have been carefully preserved (size 18 x 13 inches, and 3 inches thick), bound in thick cloth and secured by metal borders at the corner. Each book weighs approximately 12 kilos. They were sent in for use in the exhibit by Wilfredo Tan-Di.

The bank's Iloilo branch was inaugurated on the same day that the banking transactions were entered on March 15, 1897, and this despite the on-going revolution against the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines.

Decades earlier, at around 1858, the bank's management had planned to open its first branch in the capital of Pampanga because the province was beginning to gain prominence as a center of commerce and trade, with an economy that had been boosted by sugar production. But the establishment of this first branch was delayed, and by the time the bank was ready in 1897, Pampanga had been overshadowed by Iloilo in terms of economic prominence. Sugar was in high demand in such principal markets as the US, England and Australia and the prime sugar lands in Iloilo and Negros provided a good source. That was how the first branch of Banco Español Filipino got to be opened in Iloilo instead. It would take many decades more before the bank would finally set foot in Pampanga.

Hardbound books

Another equally interesting set is a hardbound book dated Dec. 29, 1913 of Banco de las Islas Filipinas (Bank of the Philippine Islands). Apparently, it was a year-end report of transactions, recorded in a smaller book (compared to the three record books earlier mentioned) with a size measuring 8 ½ x 13 ½ inches, and about an inch thick. The entries are typewritten in Spanish.

A fifth book contains the record of the extension of the charter of Banco de las Islas Filipinas from 1907 to 1927. The book is also hardbound in thick cloth and the entries, in typewritten form, are in English.

In addition, there is also a journal containing a summary of deposit accounts from 1926 to 1949 at the bank's Plaza Cervantes head office. The journal was signed by four bank presidents during the 23-year period.

The exhibit also features original brass templates used to print pesos *fuertes* and manager's checks. The first one is the metal molding used for the printing of 25 pesos *fuertes* bearing the date 1 *de Enero* 1883. Quite conspicuously, the plates did not have marks of signatures of the authorized signatories, indicating that each one of the bank notes, when printed, had to be physically signed by the appropriate monetary authorities at that time.

Another template, contributed by Wilfredo Tan-Di, is a heavy metal molding weighing about 12 kilos, used to print bank checks in Iloilo. The branch, then still officially called Banco Español Filipino, was the bank's oldest branch, having been established in 1897, a year after the start of the Philippine revolution against Spain and a year before the declaration of the Philippine independence by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

Recent additions to the showcase are copies of circular letters of credit in US and other currencies, dating variably from 1929 to 1934, contributed by Edwin Ragos of Cebu. The letters of credit contain original notes from the late Pedro Campos, who served as BPI president from 1932 up to the difficult years of the Japanese occupation.

Nationwide search

For its 150th year celebration this year, BPI has embarked on a nationwide search for rare memorabilia. The items covered in the search are old bank notes (paper money) issued by Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2 / Banco Español Filipino (or Bank of the Philippine Islands), pre-1950 annual reports, newsletters, used/unused checks, deposit slips, pay slips, passbooks, certificates of deposits, stock certificates, pre-1970 photographs of BPI office/branch premises, give-away items, portable machines (such as adding machines, check perforators, etc.), news clippings, and pre-1950 photographs of past chairmen and/or presidents of Banco Español Filipino or BPI.

Contributors who wish to lend or donate their memorabilia for the banking exhibit of BPI, may fill out pre-registration forms available at the bank's corporate communications department. All present and former officers and employees of BPI, as well as the general public, are qualified to join in the search.

Filled out forms may be sent by fax (845-5409) to the corporate communications department, Bank of the Philippine Islands, 5th floor BPI head office building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. The group can be reached through tel. nos. 845-5710 or 816-9439. BPI will pre-screen the items and will advise prospective contributors about details on the inclusion of their items. The exhibit will run until December 2001.

TECHNOLOGY LAUNCH

Epson's Point of Sale (POS) technology for retailers, fast food chains, hotels, bakeshops and drugstores was recently launched at the New World Hotel. Shown during the launch are (from left) Samuel Chan of Epson Hong Kong, Cyberpos Phils. head Myrna S. Hallare, Elizabeth Manalo of Jollibee Foods Corp., one of the first users of POS in the Philippines; Rico Li of Epson Hong Kong, Masaki Yasukawa of Epson Japan, Roy Chan of Epson HK, Alex Chan of Infrasys Hong Kong, Tomoki Ueyama of Epson Japan and Clarence Cheng of Clexpert Group, the hardware supplier of Cyberpos.

FIESTA TOURS AND TRAVEL NOW ISO CERTIFIED

The multi-awarded Fiesta Tours and Travel earned another accolade recently with its ISO 9002 certification. Shown receiving the certificate from SGS International general manager David Horlock (fourth from left) are ISO team members (from left) Roni Ferrer, Jojo Bernardo, Albert Inquin, QMR Vicky Seño, Enoe Lee, Tere Guzman and Letty Alfaro.

NINJA FEEDS PRESENTATION

Grain Handlers Phils., Inc. presented its premier line of Ninja Game Fowl Feeds to thousands of cockfight enthusiasts during the "Battle of the Stags" recently held at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City. Shown are Dr. Renato Policarpio, chief veterinarian for Grain Handlers (holding mike); David Co, Grain Handlers sales manager (third from right) and Rolando Lusong, Roligon Mega Cockpit general manager (second from right). Formally launched at the event are Ninja chick booster crumble, Ninja stag developer crumble, Ninja Grain conditioner, Ninja power pellets, Ninja breeder pellets and Ninja maintenance pellets.

'The Grinch' coloring contest winners

FOLLOWING are the winners of the recently concluded "The Grinch" Coloring Contest which was co-sponsored by the Print Advertising Organization (PRADO), United Int'l Pictures and Viva Int'l Pictures:

First prize, Alexis Marion K. de Jesus; Nina Angela C. Gregorio (2nd), Lester Von F. Biono (3rd), Francis John Sanchez (4th), Ana Miguela C. Ebrada (5th), Gino P. Sison (6th), Gleezel Joy Egos (7th), Genoa Tamara Mojica (8th), Arian John D. Fruto (9th), and Kurt Jerrick Estrada (10th).

Consolation prize winners were Iñaki Xavier Pertiera, Camille Sanchez, Kyria Theresa Chua, Lavina M. Alonzo and Vergel Lois Belarmino.

Judges based their decisions on factual colors, color medium used and actual color combinations.

All winners were sent their prize announcements via registered letters and LBC Airvelops (for those from provinces).

Winners from Metro Manila may get their prizes at Room 308, BF Condominium in Aduana, (A. Soriano) Manila, care of Shiela Ansay (527-3351), anytime from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays till Friday. Those from the provinces will receive their prizes through LBC Airvelops.

BITS & Clips

PNU to host teacher training seminar

THE Philippine Normal University (PNU) will host a Southeast Asia sub-regional workshop on the "Reform of Teacher Education and Training" on Jan. 5-7, 2001. With funding support from UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP) in Bangkok, Thailand, 15 experts in teacher education will meet at the Philippine Normal University in Manila to chart the directions of teacher education and training in view of the emerging information society and develop conceptual framework to translate and integrate the four pillars of education in the training of prospective teachers. Immediately after the Asia Pacific Teachers Education Workshop, PNU will host the International Conference on Teacher Education 2001 on Jan. 9-11 at the Manila Hotel.

Catering seminar

CATERERS, restaurateurs and those planning to start or manage a catering business are invited by ProActive Center for Training (PACT) in its Managing a Catering Business Seminar-Workshop on Jan. 8-16, 2001 at The Centerpoint Chef, 3/F Centerpoint Condominium, Julia Vargas Ave. cor. Garnet Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City from 1-5 p.m. Reservations are currently being accepted on a first-come-first-served basis at 823-4947 or e-mail at pactserv@info.com.ph. Only 20 participants will be accepted. Seminar fee covers field trip to food and equipment suppliers, all handouts, snacks, certificate of completion, and workshop materials.

KANGAROO KOREA-MARCO POLO PARTNERSHIP

Kangaroo Korea, makers of Kangaroo Shoe Polish, recently awarded the exclusive distribution of BFAD-approved Kangaroo products here in the Philippines to Marco Polo Traders, Int'l. Shown after the contract signing ceremony are (seated, from left) S. S. Woo, trade manager and S.D. Park, president of Kangaroo Korea; Teddy Lim, proprietor and his wife Lilia, administration manager and Teodoro Monte (standing, third from left), sales manager, Kangaroo products of Marco Polo Traders, Int'l. Also in photo are (standing, from left) Nina Maria Infortuno, accounts director; Myrla Bajar, president and CEO and Ted Ontimare, VP-accounts and creative of MGM, Advertising Agency of Marco Polo.

TRIPLE BLAST AT TOBLERONE PARTY

Toblerone bars overflowed and chocoholics had a grand time during the Toblerone's Swiss Tri-Party held at Cats Music Lounge and Disco in New World Hotel. Krafts Food market development manager for the Philippines and South Asia/Indo China Regi Baylosis and trade marketing coordinator for Philippine imports Kate Caranay welcomed the guests. Entertainment was provided by Livewire band and the event was aired live at Magic 89.9 dwTM, K-Lite 103.5, 99.5 RT and 88.3 Citylite, bringing together DJs Miles and Little Joey of Magic 89.9, Harry of Citylite 88.3, Winner and Tracey of 99.5 RT and Jess the Blade of 103.5 K-Lite. Jessica Wong, VP for finance of Sweetie Shoppe Inc., exclusive distributor of Toblerone in the Philippines, and Regi Baylosis drew the winning entry of Rea S. Locero of Pasig City who won an all-expense paid trip for two to Switzerland plus $5,000 pocket money.

FUN AT BOOM NA BOOM

Movie and TV actress Beth Tamayo enjoys one of the many rides at Boom na Boom carnival with a group of orphans during a recent visit at the carnival. Boom na Boom is open daily until Jan. 7, from 4 p.m onwards.

e-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

The Pinoy 'umppie' goes global

BY ERNIE O. CECILIA

QUO vadis, Pinoy professional? The Filipino "umppie" or upwardly mobile professional has the same training, tools, paradigms and environment as other global workers in the First World. I know he can be good, if not better, than his foreign counterparts. I believe in the Filipino worker. But if he wants to fast track his career climb, he has to be globally competitive.

He can be truly global, particularly, if he can transform himself. Here are 10 characteristics of the global Pinoy umppie that we must all aspire to have.

1. Techno-crazy

The global Pinoy realizes that technology is a queer thing. C.P. Snow observes that "it brings great gifts with one hand and it stabs you in the back with the other."

He understands and accepts technology as a major change driver. He knows that he must learn the technology of the business, as well as the business of technology.

If you think you can't afford technology, I say that you can't afford to be without it, if you wish to be truly competitive. Remember that "the technology-rich get richer and the rest get buried."

2. Computer literate

Joseph Campbell aptly warned us that "a PC is like an Old Testament God—lots of rules and absolutely no mercy." Many jobs in the Philippines have been lost to computers. Most of the remaining jobs require the operation of computers.

The global Pinoy is computer-proficient. If you are not computer-literate, you don't have a Chinaman's chance of landing a "meaningful" job.

Truly, Henry David Thoreau theorized it well when he said that "men have become the tools of their tools."

3. Multi-skilled

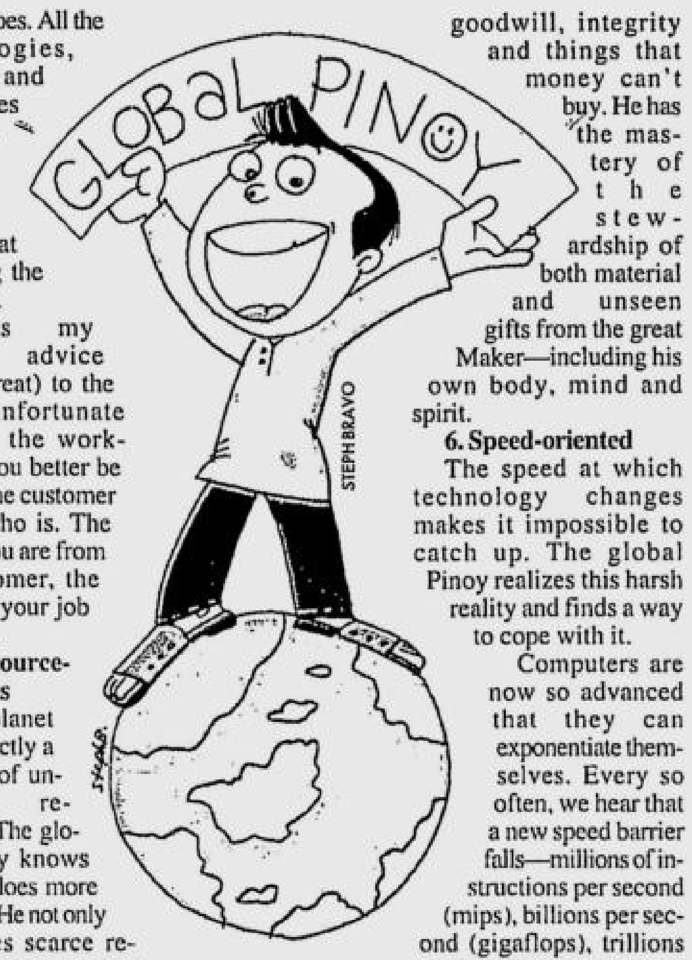
Henceforth, companies will hire only people who have several skills to be able to do a variety of jobs as they float from one team to another in their career life. The wisdom of teams dictate that synergy and teamwork are the order of the day. Multi-skills ensure better line-of-sight between individual and corporate goals.

As pay becomes a more serious burden to companies, high-performing organizations will tend to pay only for skills that create value that the customers are willing to pay for. To prepare for this eventuality, the global Pinoy secures a solid and continuing education and a mastery of as many competencies as are needed in the workplace now and in the future.

4. Customer-focused

The most important competency in the 21st century is to be customer-focused. The customer will continue to reign as king in the marketplace.

The global Pinoy understands, anticipates and serves the customer's needs. Failing that, he loses focus in what he does. All the technologies, systems and procedures in the workplace must be directed at satisfying the customer.



Here's my friendly advice (read: threat) to the poor unfortunate souls in the workplace—you better be serving the customer or one who is. The farther you are from the customer, the less able your job becomes.

5. Resource-conscious

Our planet is not exactly a fountain of unlimited resources. The global Pinoy knows this and does more with less. He not only conserves scarce resources but also multiplies them to produce better and more results.

The global Pinoy is conscious that some resources are irreplaceable or unrecoverable, such as time, goodwill, integrity and things that money can't buy. He has the mastery of the stewardship of both material and unseen gifts from the great Maker—including his own body, mind and spirit.

6. Speed-oriented

The speed at which technology changes makes it impossible to catch up. The global Pinoy realizes this harsh reality and finds a way to cope with it.

Computers are now so advanced that they can exponentiate themselves. Every so often, we hear that a new speed barrier falls—millions of instructions per second (mips), billions per second (gigaflops), trillions (terraflops), bytes per second (bps), or a million cycles per second (megahertz or MHz) ad infinitum.

Technology sets a footrace that nearly no one wins—users against technology, people versus machines, nations against nations and, who knows, man against his Great Manufacturer.

7. Uncompromising in quality

To the global Pinoy, *"hindi puwede ang puwede na."* If it is worth doing at all, it must be worth doing well. The first thing that sets globally competitive products and services apart from the also-rans is quality.

While Juran defined quality as "fitness for use" decades ago, competition has unceasingly and ruthlessly redefined it to levels never before envisioned. Quality products come from people, technology and processes of global quality.

8. Adept at change

The global Pinoy lives in a new economy—not in his "lolo's economy." The workplace of his grandfather is far different from his workplace now and in the future. He welcomes change as a parched land welcomes rain.

The global Pinoy knows that when he shall have known all the answers, some crazy billionaire in a far away land can suddenly change all the questions. So, he must learn to adapt new ways and eventually become adept at these changes. That is the way to survive and succeed in this dog-eats-dog world.

9. Systems-wise

The global Pinoy has his own system to deal with problems and make decisions in the workplace day by day and over the long-term. Some problems are invisible to the naked and untrained eye.

John Bear quipped that "if white smoke is rising from a disk drive, that is probably where the problem lies, unless your disk drive has just elected the new Pope."

Some problems have the knack of hiding from you for awhile and rearing their ugly heads only when the ill effects are about to explode in your face. There must be a system in place to understand and cope with sticky situations like this.

10. Tolerant of ambiguity

The global Pinoy accepts that there are several ways of looking at the same thing. When paradigms change and paradoxes appear faster than we can cope, there must be a good rhyme and reason for many things we see, hear or feel.

Where it's at for you is not necessarily where it's at for the global Pinoy and he tries to unravel the ambiguities and understand where you are coming from. In fact, he not only admits that there are other ways of doing things but that there is someone out there better than he in doing the things he does best. But that does not dismay him. It prods him to better his personal best.

The year that was saw challenges for us Pinoys. As the saying goes, "We ain't seen nothing yet!" I am sure the new year will be full of newer experiences for us but nothing will surprise the global Pinoy.

How to handle global clients

BY RIA VITA D. PUANGCO

Advice
FOR THE
ANXIOUS PERSON
AT WORK

I AM a manager in a semiconductor company and I've just been appointed to handle customer relations and market development with global clients based in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the US. My key responsibility is to ensure profitable and effective business relationships with our customers. Can you give me some advice? One of the things I fear most is dealing with other cultures.

Suddenly International

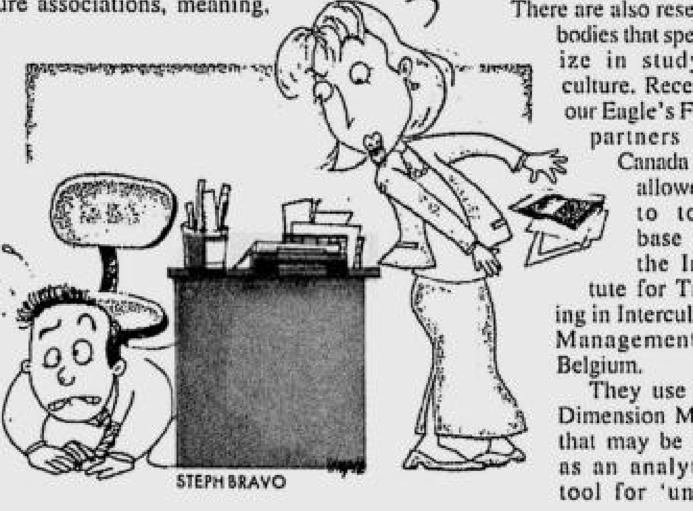
A core competency of managers in our present global environment is cross-cultural sensitivity. This is the ability to read verbal and non-verbal cues of a particular culture.

You are right to be concerned. The list of business venture failures due to the lack of fit between cultural preconceptions and standardized corporate strategies is long.

A classic example is the famous baby food manufacturer who wanted to sell in Africa. However, they did not consider that African consumers make picture associations, meaning, that they expect to buy what they see on the label. Bottled baby food with cute, cuddly babies on the label did not appeal to many consumers for obvious reasons. That venture was losing money until someone came up with the bright idea to adopt the African consumers' concept of product packaging.

Tools

Fortunately for international marketers like you, there are many tools available in the market today that can help. One is called Geographical Marketing. It is a software designed to collect data on your market locations and present these in a form that traces market demographics and psychographics over time. It allows one to make assumptions about future trends and quickly diagnose where the markets are going.



There are also research bodies that specialize in studying culture. Recently, our Eagle's Flight partners in Canada have allowed us to touch base with the Institute for Training in Intercultural Management in Belgium.

They use a 5-Dimension Model that may be used as an analytical tool for 'understanding' the practical consequences of a group's "collective mental programming." The model is based on the research of Geert Hofstede who studied and mapped out the dimensions for over a hundred countries. The identified dimensions are power distance, individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. A dimension unique to Asia is Confucian dynamism.

Dimensions

Power distance measures the extent to which members who do not hold power accept the power differences in a group. Individualism is when people expect to take care of themselves and their immediate family only. This dimension measures how close or open a group is to outside influences. It also includes how people handle work, responsibility and relationships. Masculinity is the measurement of how inclined are the members of a group towards achievement and success versus caring for others and quality of life. Uncertainty avoidance measures how controlling a group can be. Insights on the societal structures, stress levels to be managed and how people communicate can also be formed. The last dimension called Confucian dynamism is the extent to which a group looks at and plans for the future.

Using these dimensions, here are some characteristics of the three countries you mentioned: Hong Kong is characterized by a long-term orientation and an innate acceptance of change. The prevailing values are perseverance, practicality, thriftiness and investment. Taiwan also values perseverance. People work under great anxiety and stress. They are self-motivated to work hard. They have a need to agree with their co-workers and to avoid failure. The USA culture is characterized by individualism. People have private opinions. The "I" consciousness demands that the obligations to the self are fulfilled first and foremost. There is also a great tendency to polarize and decisiveness is a respected virtue.

Openness

Of course, an analysis of these dimensions is not enough. I would say that people involved in cross-cultural relations of any kind require an openness to receive as well as to give. The ability to accept the limitations of one's perspectives so as to receive the richness of another is balanced and enriched with the desire to give of oneself to the task ahead.

Another good norm is to be assertive by summarizing at the end of conversations what was discussed to ensure common understanding. As Filipinos, we sometimes hesitate to ask questions to clarify for fear of losing face. But guessing the actual agreements is risky and may likely lead to more problems down the line. When you write an email, try to test it with a trusted officemate for understanding. You may be surprised at the insightful suggestions he will make. Finally, in face-to-face meetings, organize your thoughts well, express yourself and check for understanding. Sooner or later, you will get to know the persons you work with overseas personally and professionally. Then, your journey towards cross-cultural management will be less rough.

I hope these tips help and good luck! Thank you for writing to us and I would appreciate it if you let me know how your new job is going and what tools you have decided to use in the end.

(The author is the product development and strategic alliance officer of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. She handles coordination and relationship building with the current strategic partners of Ancilla. Comments and requests for advice on work-related problems may be sent through email to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or fax number 892-2902.)*

Commitment to resolutions start with self-analysis

RECIPES *for* LEARNING

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

HAVE a blessed New Year!

Did you make new resolutions for 2001? Or did you just rehash your previous New Year's resolutions with your usual "cross my fingers and hope to die?"

To really make you stick to your New Year's resolutions, you need to be committed to them. To be committed to them, you must believe that there is something in them for you. That you will reap a thousand and one benefits when you eventually act on your resolutions. Particularly, these benefits should be measurable and tangible to be better appreciated.

For example, if one of your New Year's resolutions is to stop smoking you must really be committed to stop smoking. In order to be committed, you must realize personal benefits when you finally stop smoking and many other benefits for you personally, for your family, for your friends and the society in general.

How do you measure these benefits? By doing a self-analysis, which we started last week. This includes evaluating your strengths and weaknesses as a person and those that are within your control such as your physical self, your studies, your work and career, your communication skills, your talents and abilities, your values and attitudes, your behaviors and statements, your family, your personal relations, your social and professional relations, your commitments, the way you do things, the way you act and react, your emotions, your fears, your resources (time, money, knowledge, personal systems and methods, personal belongings, personal assets), your recreation and entertainment, your physical and mental wellness, your spiritual life and many other aspects of your life.

Another way of doing self-analysis is to get insights from the saddest time of your life, the happiest time of your life, the turning points in your life, regrets you may have about your past and why, fears that you have of the future and why, your home problems, your religious doubts and fears, things you have never told anyone, things that you would like to know but do not dare to ask, your difficulties in dealing with people, your failures, your successes, your secret longings, the help you wanted to get from others, what you would most like to get rid of, your greatest torment, the less known side of you, your experiences with friendship, wonderful things in your life, your moods, your secret thoughts, the bright and dark side of your life, what you are searching for, your greatest joy, the worst hours of your life, your prayer self, your God-experience, your anxieties and other past experiences and personal history.

Another mode is to determine opportunities and threats that you might face in your environment or things that are outside your person or control, e.g. your family, your friends, your officemates, your neighbors, your company or school, your boss, your teacher, your neighborhood and community, your job, your career path, your organizations, the job market, and others. Take your family as an example. The opportunities they present to you are: financial and moral support, a roof over your head, sound advice from your elders, nutritious food to comfort you, a warm bed, camaraderie and familial love and affection, home entertainment, and many others. The threats are maybe they do not approve of the person you love most, you have no privacy at home with so many of your extended family members living with you, and many others unique to you and your family.

Now this is not an easy thing to do because it calls for your full intrapersonal intelligence that we do not practice as a habit. Intrapersonal intelligence is your self-knowledge, your sensitivity to your own values, purpose, feelings; your developed sense of self. So you need to really concentrate on the here and now. It is best that you do this in the privacy of an enclosed room or inside a church during those unholy hours, or in a secluded part of a garden or park. With pen and paper on hand, some of the techniques for doing your self-analysis are:

1. Utter to yourself sentences beginning with "I'm aware…." Examples are: "I'm aware I'm sitting." "I'm aware of my feelings." Do this one by one for each of the elements of your personal, home, academic, emotional, moral, spiritual, occupational or professional, social, physical and recreational life to determine your strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, for all the elements in your external environment to determine opportunities and threats from them. This technique will help you focus on the here and now to separate your person from what you want to be. Do this at 10 minutes interval taking time to write down your analyses.

2. Or place two chairs in a room where you can look at yourself. Sit in one chair and imagine one of the members of your family, or a colleague, or a friend, or your boss sitting in the other chair. Engage in a dialogue with that other person confronting you and telling you about your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Then, assume your own persona and tell the other person about your own SWOT and reply to their own observations. Continue the conversation and see if you have learned something about your self. This technique will help you take a more objective look at your own self. Record your analyses.

If you want resolutions that you can act upon and that will bring you closer to your achievement of your dreams, do your homework first. Do your self-analysis first. Next week, we will help you determine your long-term goals, your lifetime resolutions as we continue our Workshop on Setting Goals, Objectives and Action Plans.

Happy Three Kings! Like the Magi, let's offer our best to God.

(Send feedback to moje.ramos@aquino.zzn.com*)*

What do you do when your idea is rejected by your boss?

WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I just left my boss' office where he shot down my great idea. Is there anything I can do besides throw eight months of hard work down the drain? That's my baby he's throwing out with the bath water.

Baby

Speaking of babies, your letter reminded me of the first time my parents visited our home to see their new granddaughter. After putting Hallie down for a nap, my wife and I tiptoed out of her room and began whispering. My mom took one look at us and grabbed the vacuum cleaner from the closet.

"What's with the silent act?" she cried. "You want to toughen her up so she'll be a sound sleeper." And she proceeded to vacuum the hallway outside Hallie's bedroom while doing a fair rendition of Carmen. Well, Mom was right: now Hallie can sleep through anything—as long as there's a vacuum cleaner going.

Now, the point of this story is not that you should learn to sleep through your job. It's that you should treat your boss' "no" like the vacuum cleaner—not as a rejection, but as a device to toughen you and your idea. If you can put up with the noise, you can gain some valuable info about your boss, your idea, and how to succeed in your company. The following questions have been borrowed from author and consultant Gifford Pinchot.

1. Why was your idea rejected? Most of us hear "no" and then stop listening. As a result we never get to learn from our rejections. If you want to turn that "no" into a "yes," or get a "yes" the next time, you need to take a deep breath and a pad of paper and go back to your boss with a lot of questions. Knowing his specific objections may enable you to change your proposal to make it acceptable-or may give you the ammo to create an acceptable proposal next time.

2. Which was rejected: your idea or your presentation? Maybe you'll find out your idea was fine—it was something in your presentation that toppled it: an unclear chart, a glaring error, or an off-color joke. Any of those could do it.

Once you know what it was, you can try to correct it—and you'll know what to watch out for next time.

3. Is there a better sponsor for your idea? If your boss is a deadend, look for another road that can get you where you want to go. See if there's another department or a different manager that might be interested.

Of course, sometimes bosses are like vacuum cleaners in another way: they suck up ideas and make them disappear. So if you try the above and nothing works, it's probably time to pull the plug. (Not on your boss—on the idea.) Take stock of what you've learned and then try to "clean up" on the next one.

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: If my boss rejects my idea, I . . .

- Would pack my tent and go away, 18 percent
- Would fight him all the way, 22 percent
- Would find a sponsor who's willing to play, 59 percent

Our winning strategy came from Julie from Meridian, ID, "I'd wait a safe period of time, then present the idea again in a way that makes him believe it's actually his idea. There is no way he will shoot down his own idea. Works like a charm."

(Send feedback to peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph*)*

NEXT week in Career Tales: Cathy Palma brings Philippine-made training programs to Southeast Asia

Which is the only A+ formula?
ASK YOUR PEDIATRICIAN TODAY.
MeadJohnson Nutritionals

For feedback or suggestions ls_2bu@

LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

TYRA Banks continues to sizzle.

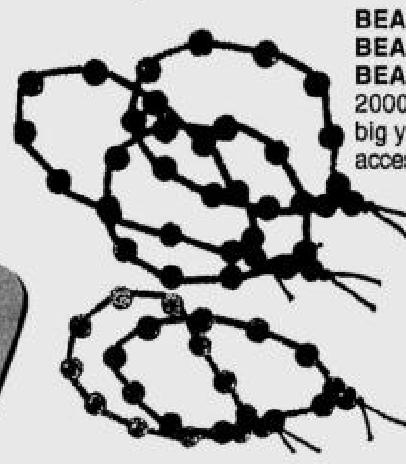
THE PRETTY Woman is still pretty hot.

DONITA. Still everyone's favorite VJ

JOSHUA JACKSON. Everyone's favorite actor

to be young • to be you • to be young • To be you!

GADGET of the year—the Nokia cell phone


BEADS, BEADS, BEADS. 2000 was a big year for accessories.

THE 2BU! YEARENDER READER SURVEY

The best and the worst of 2000

'N Sync stinks, Santana's and Rob Thomas' 'Smooth' really smooth, Keanu Reeves and Joshua Jackson are top cuties, and 'Harry Potter' is best read

THE RESULTS are in! After hours and hours of tallying your votes, here are the best and the worst of 2000 according to the 2bU! Yearender Survey.

Music

The survey results confirmed one thing—a huge number of people are still going crazy over boy bands. A battle ensued between 'N Sync and Westlife fans, but the Backstreet Boys groupies remained an energy level higher. Our inbox was clogged with an endless stream of mail all proclaiming the same thing—they want the Backstreet Boys to win.

The real winner, though, according to you, was Rivermaya. They were voted Best Band, and their album "Free" snagged the Best Album Packaging spot.

Other musical groups who got the thumbs-up were The Gorrs, Destiny's Child, Slapshock Limp Bizkit and Matchbox 20.

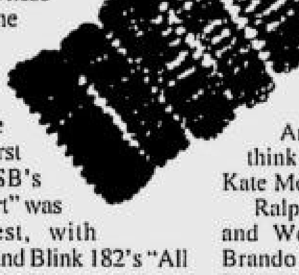
'N Sync was voted Worst Band of 2000.

According to 2bU! readers, the year's No. 1 song was Santana's "Smooth." The worst? The Moffatts' "Bang Bang Boom."

But fans of the local and international scenes all clamored for their favorite singers—Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears, Fred Durst, Ronan Keating and Gwen Stefani—there's no doubt about it. The queen still remains on top. Madonna was voted Best Singer for 2000.

Poor Aaron Carter got a big thumbs-down from the 2bU! readers.

Although there was a strong fight between NU 107.5 and Magic 89.9, mainstream ruled over alternative. Magic 89.9 was voted Best Radio Station. Here's a tip from 2bU! readers: keep your radio's dial from being stuck to dwRR 101.9 and 97.1 LSFM. These stations topped the Worst list.



Couch potatoes put down the verdict for the year's best and worst music videos. BSB's "Shape of My Heart" was declared the best, with Eminem's "Stan" and Blink 182's "All the Small Things" tied at second place. Unfortunately for Stephen Gately fans, this ex-Boyzone's "New Beginning" was hailed the Worst Music Video of the year.

And 2000 wasn't the year for The Moffatts. "Submodalities" was declared the Worst Album of the Year.

Film

Although we also received votes that made this movie a placer on our Worst list, "Charlie's Angels" reigned high and was voted Best Movie of the Year. The year's biggest cinematic blunder, according to 2bU! readers, was "Urban Legends 2."

No other theater came close. Glorietta 4 Cinemas got the top spot for the year's Best Movie Theater. The cinemas in Megamall were given a big thumbs-down.

Joshua Jackson and Keanu Reeves were voted Best Actors of the Year, leaving Adam Sandler, Bruce Willis and Chris Klein in the dust. Freddie Prinze Jr. was not "all that;" this was according to 2bU! readers, who gave the teenybopper prince a big F in acting.

"Pretty Woman" Julia Roberts was sitting pretty in the Best Actress seat, with Cameron Diaz just a spot lower. Denise Richards ought to rethink her career—2bU! readers think she's better off elsewhere.

Fashion

Hordes of people were still salivating over Marcus Schenkenberg, Antonio Sabato Jr. and Troy Montero, while most of them have gotten tired of Tyson Beckford. Tyra Banks was sizzling. Giselle Bundchen was hot and so was Angel Aquino. But 2bU! readers think the ramps can now do without Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell.

Ralph Lauren was voted both Best and Worst Designer of the Year. Brando Umali and Ronald Pasion, Rajo Laurel and Inno Sotto also got the thumbs-up.

Abercrombie & Fitch was voted Best Brand of the Year, with Gucci, Guess, Bench and Steve Madden all tied for second place. 2bU! readers claim to be sick of Tommy Hilfiger and Fubu.

Trips to the malls are not complete if 2bU! readers do not drop by People Are People, Tower Records, Beauty Bar, Anonymous and the *tiangges* in Greenhills.

Denim jackets, cargo pants, the bronzed look and capri pants—2bU! readers just went gaga over these trends. They've spoken—Buddha beads, platform shoes and body bags are "soooo last season."

Here's a list of must-have accessories: What Would Jesus Do? bracelets, silver jewelry and beads, beads, beads. Our readers think you can do without feather necklaces and nose rings.

Jolina Magdangal was voted Worst Fashion Icon. But Madonna was still holding on tightly to her crown and scepter as she was voted the Fashion Icon of the Year.

Beauty

Johnson & Johnson's pH 5.5 products were proclaimed as the Beauty Essentials of the Year, while cosmetic surgery and liposuction were given a big no-no.

When 2bU! readers want to be primped and pampered, they rush over

THE BEST/ p.C4

MADONNA. Timeless fashion icon.

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See posters and flyers for details.
PROMO PERIOD: DEC. 11, 2000 TO MARCH 31, 2001 Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1295, series of 2000

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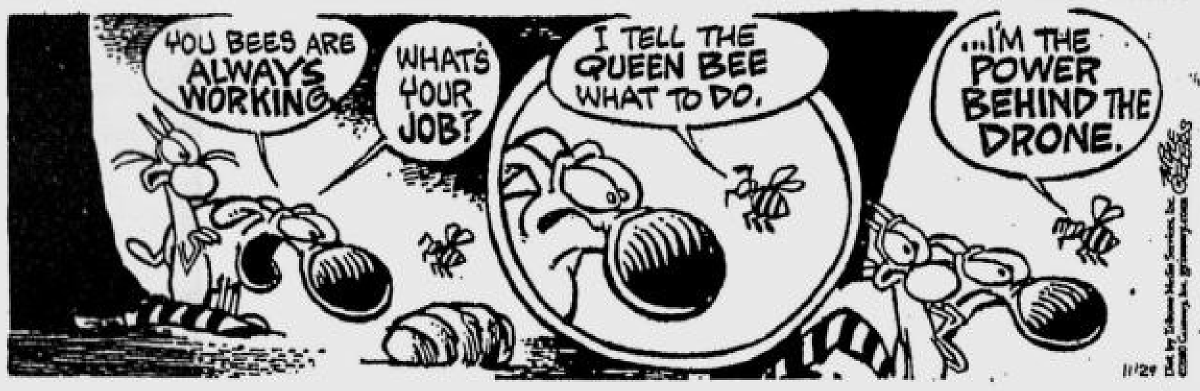
BRANCHES: [illegible] PROVINCIAL: [illegible]

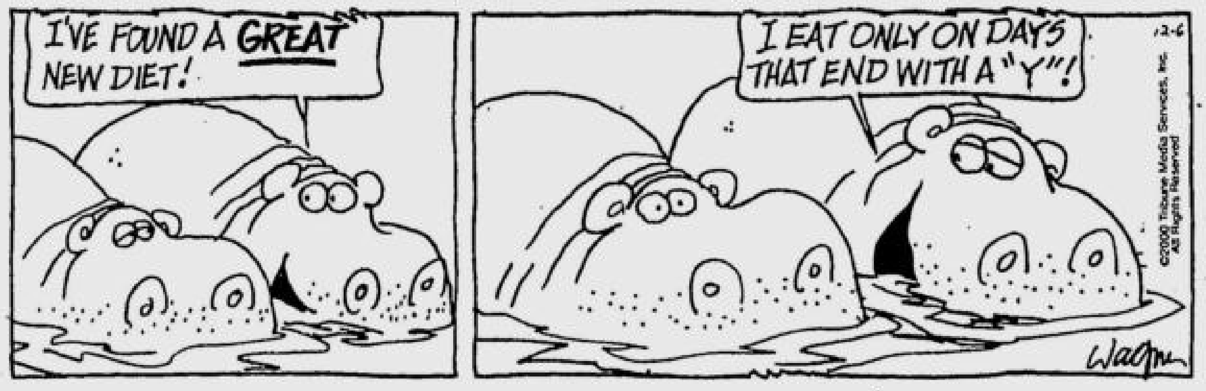
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


YOU BEES ARE ALWAYS WORKING.
WHAT'S YOUR JOB?
I TELL THE QUEEN BEE WHAT TO DO.
...I'M THE POWER BEHIND THE DRONE.
11/29

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I'VE FOUND A GREAT NEW DIET!
I EAT ONLY ON DAYS THAT END WITH A "Y"!
12-6
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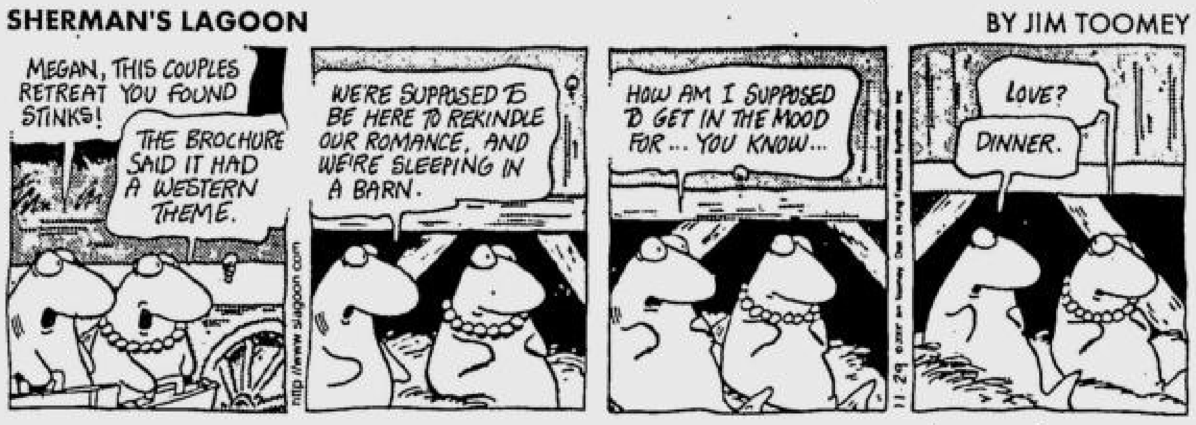
Wagner

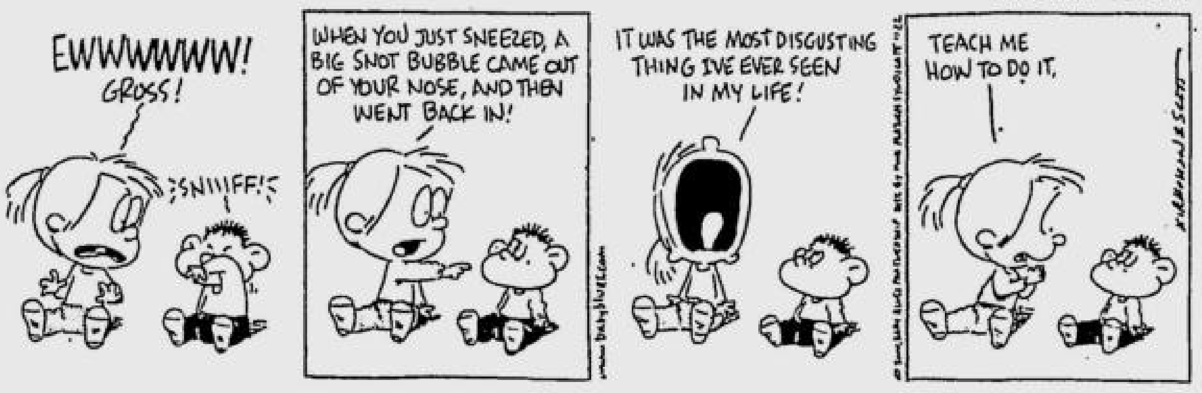
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


MEGAN, THIS COUPLES RETREAT YOU FOUND STINKS!
THE BROCHURE SAID IT HAD A WESTERN THEME.
http://www.slagoon.com
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HERE TO REKINDLE OUR ROMANCE, AND WE'RE SLEEPING IN A BARN.
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO GET IN THE MOOD FOR... YOU KNOW...
11-29
LOVE?
DINNER.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


EWWWWWW! GROSS!
SNIIIFF!
WHEN YOU JUST SNEEZED, A BIG SNOT BUBBLE CAME OUT OF YOUR NOSE, AND THEN WENT BACK IN!
www.babyblues.com
IT WAS THE MOST DISGUSTING THING I'VE EVER SEEN IN MY LIFE!
TEACH ME HOW TO DO IT.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jason Marsden, Mel Gibson, Victoria Principal, Bobby Hull, Stephen Stills, Michael Schumacher, Robert Loggia, Dabney Coleman

Happy Birthday: The year ahead will be filled with emotional changes that promise excitement, intrigue and opportunities. You have the stamina and the wherewithal to achieve all that you set your heart on. Your confusion is lifting, and your vision is leading you in the right direction. It's time for you to make a quantum leap to bigger and better things. If you follow your dreams, and believe in yourself, the rest will fall into place. Your numbers: 6, 14, 26, 29, 33, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take a look at your options. You should try to purchase property for investment purposes. You may face limitations if you get involved in joint ventures. Try to go it alone.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You may find that relationships are changing. Go with your first instincts when meeting potential mates or dealing with present partners.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take time to get to know some of your colleagues. Your connections and popularity will ensure help with future professional projects.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Social activity should be on your mind, and you may even find that it will lead to exciting romantic interludes.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Emotional outbursts can be expected on the home front if you haven't followed the path that the family was hoping you would. Keep a low profile, and they will become accepting.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will be well received if you take a leadership position. Don't be afraid to speak your piece. Your sound ideas will provide solutions to the organization's situation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): It's a good time to make a career move. You can advance within the company or make a complete change. Look at all your options and be prepared to make a residential move if necessary.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't hold back your true feelings. Someone you have vouched for in the past may let you down, and you must make clear how you feel.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Stick to the basics. You will accomplish much if you work on your own. Don't count on those who say they will pitch in. Rely on your own efforts if you don't want to be disappointed.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Passion may sidetrack you today. Someone you meet during your daily routine will capture your attention and possibly your heart. Be careful if you're already attached.

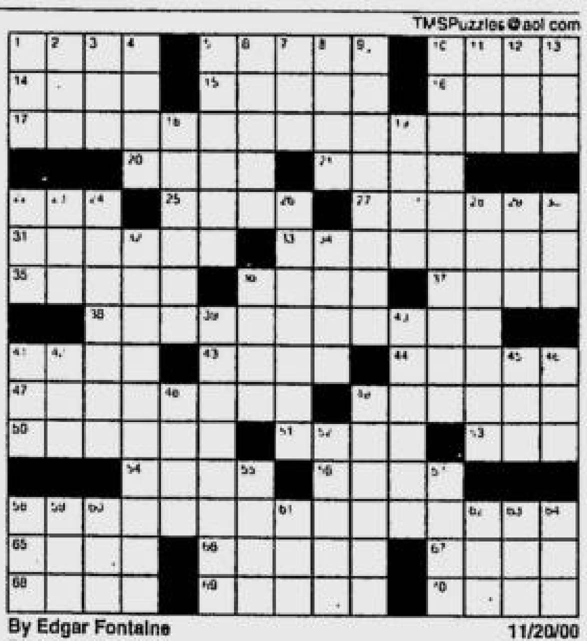
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Work may be confusing. Someone may not be giving you all the information needed to do your job. Ferret out what you need to know as well as why you weren't told.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): This will be a great day to get busy and make those changes you have been contemplating. You will pick the right group to join or the best look for a new you. Go for it.

Birthday Baby: You are forever trying to make things better for those around you. You are trusting, giving and eager to please. You have an interest in the arts and a good eye for value.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Edgar Fontaine
Dighton, MA

11/20/00

ACROSS
1 Queen of Scots
5 Bikini, e.g.
10 Pipe down!
14 1958 Pulitzer winner
15 Wireless
16 Where most people live
17 Large blue-and-yellow pitchman?
20 Booty
21 Clairvoyant
22 Unit of elec.
25 Cold War letters
27 Renter
31 Tolerance
33 St. Paul's letters
35 Swashbuckling Flynn
36 Tree trunk
37 Time long past
38 With "The," red-and-blue film?
41 Got an A
43 Contends
44 Imperial
47 Midday repast
49 Modeling
50 Legendary king
51 Hot tubs
53 Born in France
54 __-Ude, Russia
56 "For Your _ Only"
58 With "A," Kubrick's yellow-and-red film?
65 Warmonger
66 Web communique
67 Singer Simone
68 Caesar's date
69 Medicinal shrub
70 Aspersion

DOWN
1 Houlihan's rank: abbr.
2 In the past
3 Theol. belief
4 Holler
5 Merchant ship
6 Small pies
7 Lyric poem
8 Disinformation
9 More solitary
10 Coiffures
11 Cold War letters
12 Immoral misdeed
13 Hedda's topper
18 Southern solecism
19 Force of astronauts
22 Tankard filler
23 Mal de __ (seasickness)
24 %
26 Resumes business
28 Blackthorn liqueur
29 Eterne
30 Compass pt.
32 Groundhogs
34 Selling feature
36 Panache
39 Highly impresses
40 Tedious writer
41 Carte preceder
42 Mongrel
45 Sue __ Langdon
46 Apparel size: abbr.
48 Bulky guy
49 Bribe
52 Chinese duck
55 Iditarod terminus
57 Without in Bordeaux
58 Greek letter
59 Young Scot
60 Be in debt
61 Sought office
62 Zilch
63 Wildebeest
64 Musical gift

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

G	A	S	L	A	M	P	■	O	P	E	N	T	O	P
A	S	T	O	R	I	A	■	R	O	M	A	I	N	E
L	A	U	D	I	N	G	■	C	L	I	M	B	E	R
A	R	M	E	D	T	O	T	H	E	T	E	E	T	H
H	U	P	■	■	■	D	O	A	■	■	■	T	I	A
A	L	E	C	■	B	A	E	R	S	■	D	A	M	P
D	E	R	R	I	E	S	■	D	E	F	I	N	E	S
■	■	■	A	V	A	■	■	■	A	L	T	■	■	■
T	R	A	C	E	R	S	■	F	L	U	T	I	S	T
H	E	C	K	■	D	E	N	I	S	■	O	N	E	S
E	V	E	■	■	■	T	A	R	■	■	■	P	R	E
B	I	T	I	N	G	T	H	E	B	U	L	L	E	T
A	S	O	C	I	A	L	■	O	R	L	E	A	N	S
R	O	S	E	T	T	E	■	F	I	A	N	C	E	E
D	R	E	S	S	E	D	■	F	E	N	D	E	R	S

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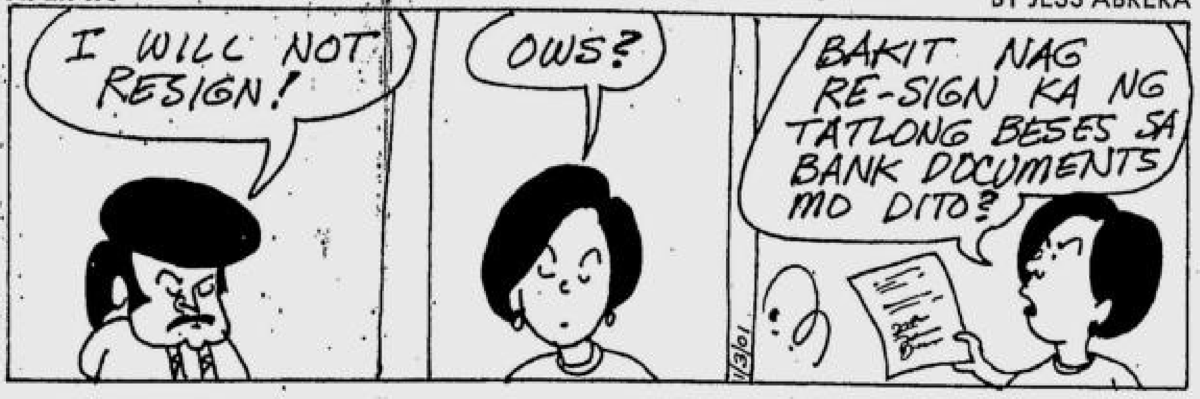
11/20/00

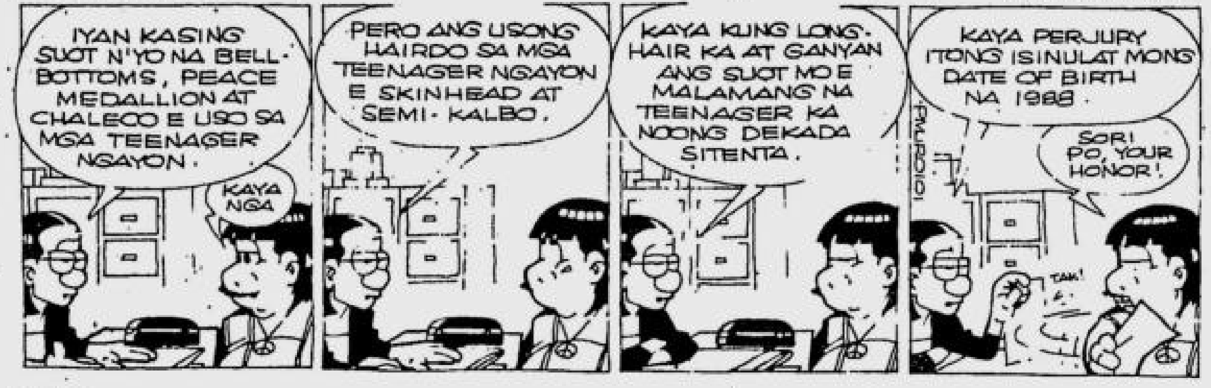
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


I WILL NOT RESIGN!
OWS?
1/3/01
BAKIT NAG RE-SIGN KA NG TATLONG BESES SA BANK DOCUMENTS MO DITO?

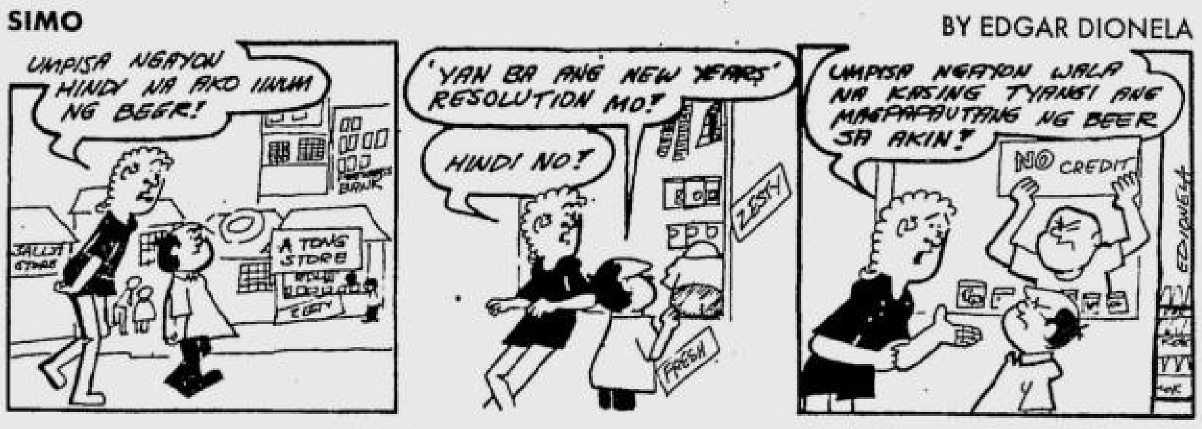
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


IYAN KASING SUOT N'YO NA BELL-BOTTOMS, PEACE MEDALLION AT CHALECO E USO SA MGA TEENAGER NGAYON.
KAYA NGA
PERO ANG USONG HAIRDO SA MGA TEENAGER NGAYON E SKINHEAD AT SEMI-KALBO.
KAYA KUNG LONG-HAIR KA AT GANYAN ANG SUOT MO E MALAMANG NA TEENAGER KA NOONG DEKADA SITENTA.
KAYA PERJURY ITONG ISINULAT MONG DATE OF BIRTH NA 1988.
SORI PO, YOUR HONOR!
TAK!

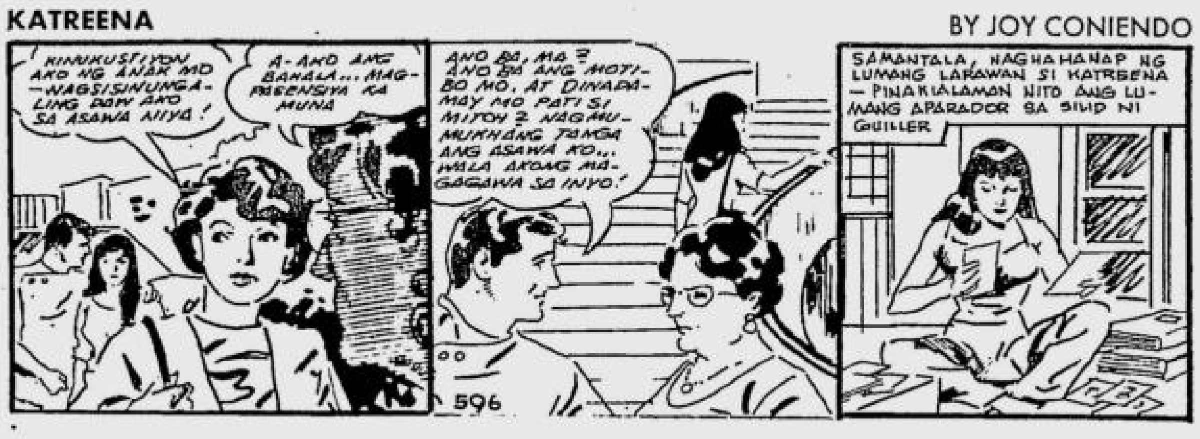
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


UMPISA NGAYON HINDI NA AKO IINUM NG BEER!
A TONG STORE
'YAN BA ANG NEW YEARS' RESOLUTION MO?
HINDI NO?
ZESTY
FRESH
UMPISA NGAYON WALA NA KASING TYANGI ANG MAGPAPAUTANG NG BEER SA AKIN?
NO CREDIT
EDIONELA

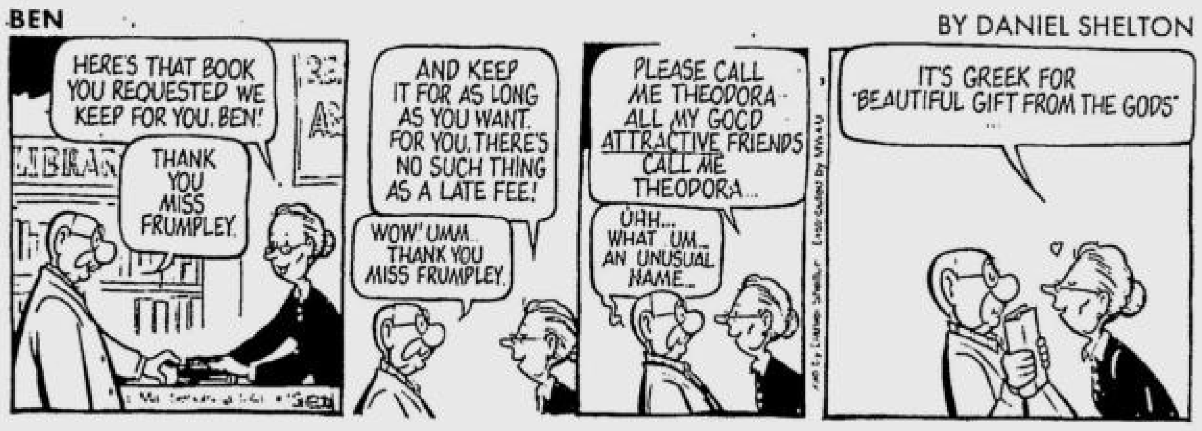
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


KINIKUSTIYON AKO NG ANAK MO —NAGSISINUNGALING DAW AKO SA ASAWA NIYA!
A-AKO ANG BAHALA... MAGPASENSIYA KA MUNA
ANO BA, MA? ANO BA ANG MOTIBO MO, AT DINADAMAY MO PATI SI MITCH? NAGMUMUKHANG TANGA ANG ASAWA KO... WALA AKONG MAGAGAWA SA INYO!
596
SAMANTALA, NAGHAHANAP NG LUMANG LARAWAN SI KATREENA —PINAKIALAMAN NITO ANG LUMANG APARADOR SA SILID NI GUILLER

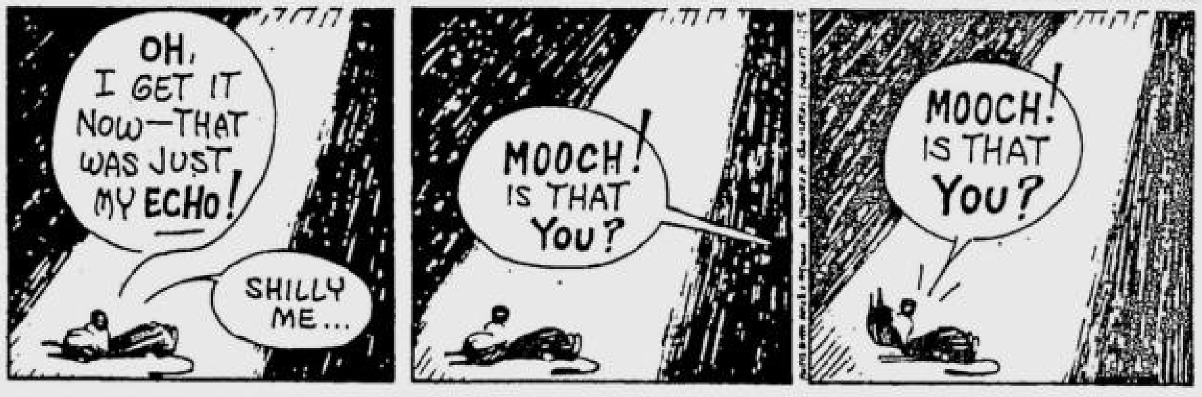
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE'S THAT BOOK YOU REQUESTED WE KEEP FOR YOU, BEN!
THANK YOU MISS FRUMPLEY.
LIBRAS
AND KEEP IT FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT. FOR YOU, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A LATE FEE!
WOW! UMM... THANK YOU MISS FRUMPLEY.
PLEASE CALL ME THEODORA. ALL MY GOOD ATTRACTIVE FRIENDS CALL ME THEODORA...
UHH... WHAT... UM... AN UNUSUAL NAME...
IT'S GREEK FOR "BEAUTIFUL GIFT FROM THE GODS"

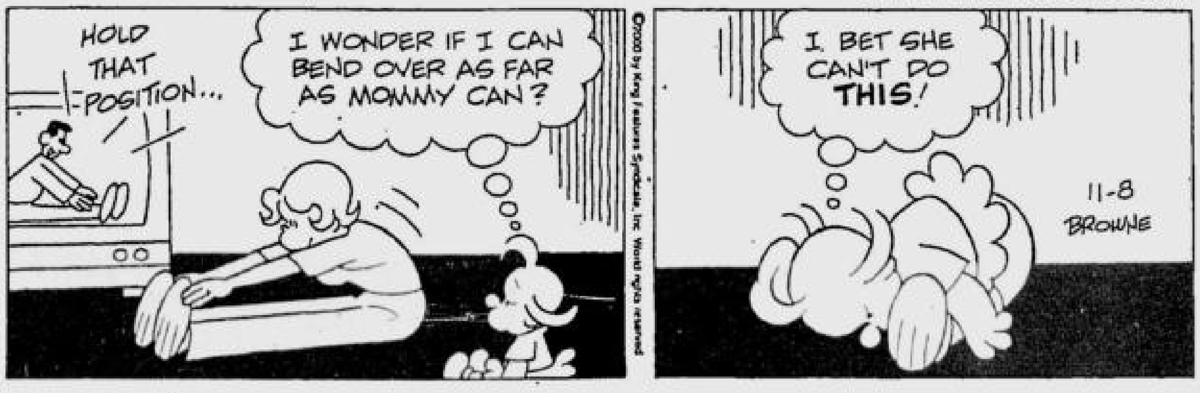
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OH, I GET IT NOW—THAT WAS JUST MY ECHO!
SHILLY ME...
MOOCH! IS THAT YOU?
MOOCH! IS THAT YOU?

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


HOLD THAT POSITION...
I WONDER IF I CAN BEND OVER AS FAR AS MOMMY CAN?
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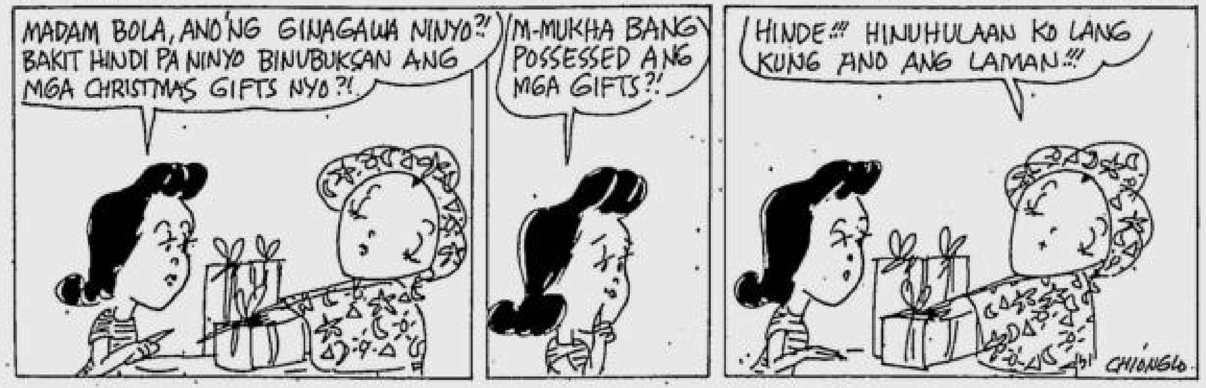
I BET SHE CAN'T DO THIS!
11-8
BROWNE

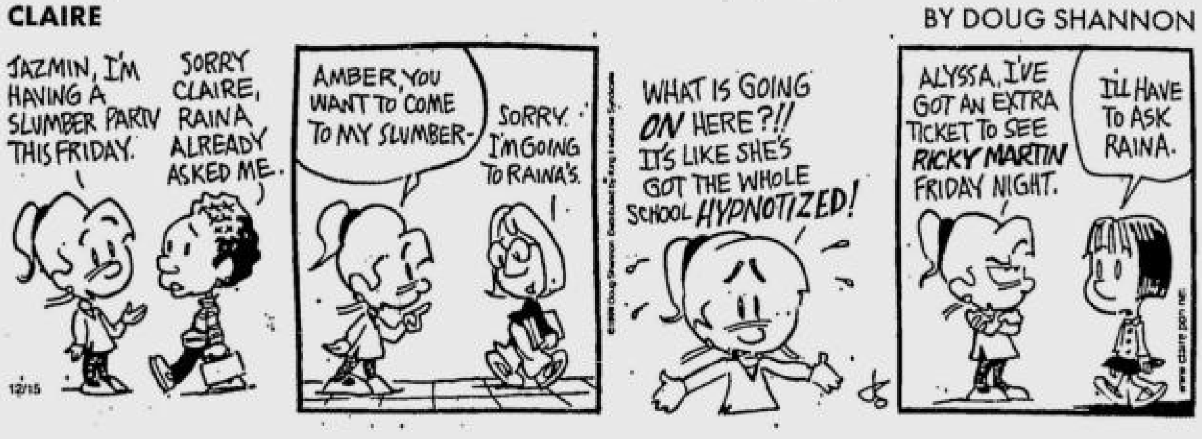
LOVEKNOTS

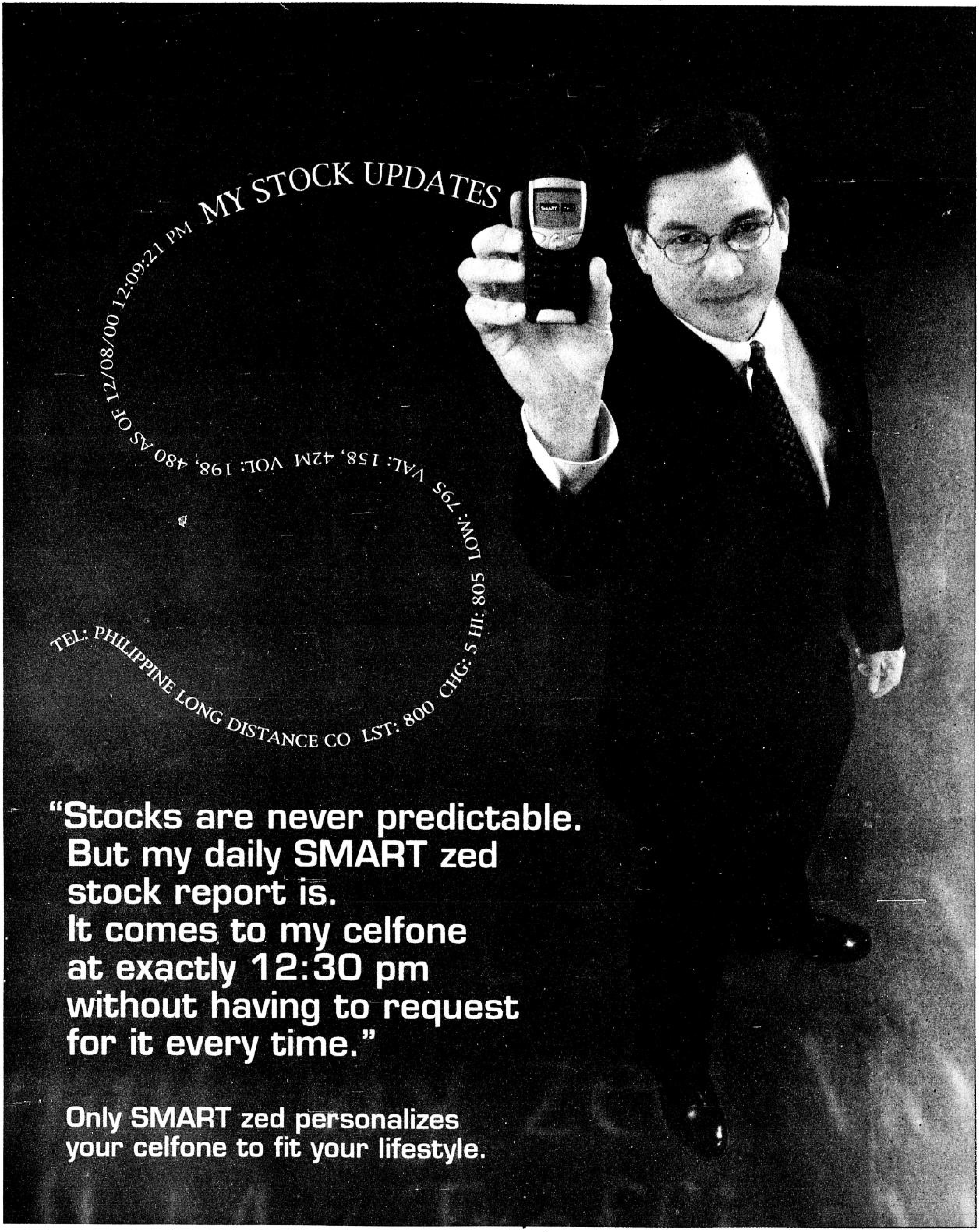
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MADAM BOLA, ANO'NG GINAGAWA NINYO?! BAKIT HINDI PA NINYO BINUBUKSAN ANG MGA CHRISTMAS GIFTS NYO?!
M-MUKHA BANG POSSESSED ANG MGA GIFTS?!
HINDE!!! HINUHULAAN KO LANG KUNG ANO ANG LAMAN!!!
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


JAZMIN, I'M HAVING A SLUMBER PARTY THIS FRIDAY.
SORRY CLAIRE, RAINA ALREADY ASKED ME.
12/15
AMBER, YOU WANT TO COME TO MY SLUMBER-
SORRY. I'M GOING TO RAINA'S.
WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?!! IT'S LIKE SHE'S GOT THE WHOLE SCHOOL HYPNOTIZED!
ALYSSA, I'VE GOT AN EXTRA TICKET TO SEE RICKY MARTIN FRIDAY NIGHT.
I'LL HAVE TO ASK RAINA.
www.claire.com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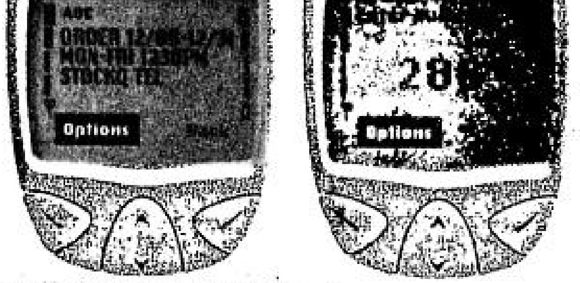
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Options

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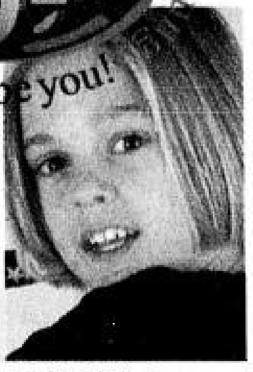
INNO Sotto was given the thumbs-up.

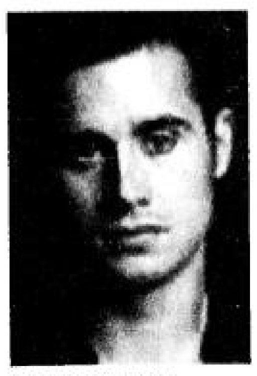
TROY Montero—favorite male model

RUNNER-UP. Cameron Diaz was one spot below Julia.



"AARON is just a pesky little kid," say 2bU! readers.

ANTONIO Sabato Jr. had everyone swooning.



HE'S NOT ALL THAT. Freddie Prinze was given the thumbs down.

WARP LIVES ON. Ronald Pasion and Brando Umali

CARGO pants have become a fashion staple.

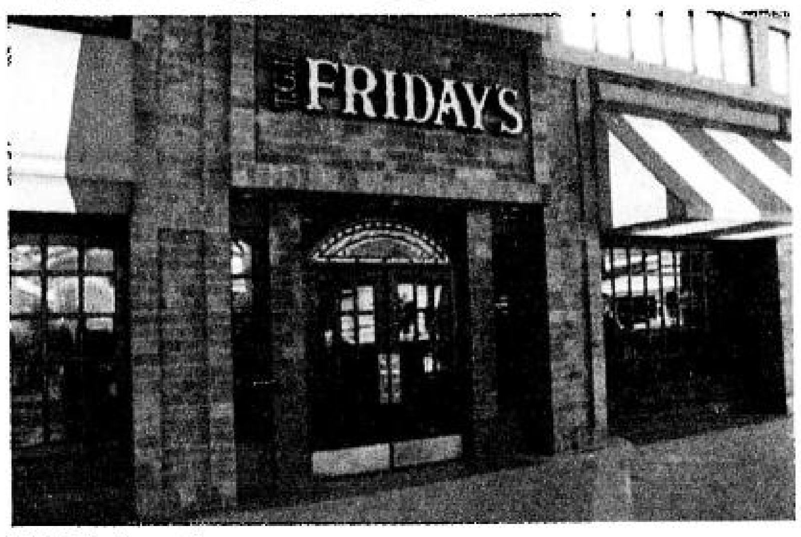
The best and the worst of 2000

(From page C1)

to the nearest David's Salon—the year's Best Beauty Salon. Long hair is still in, corn rows and blonde hair were out, according to the survey.

If you want to get fit, our readers say, taebo was the way to go. Keep your hands off those Bangkok pills.

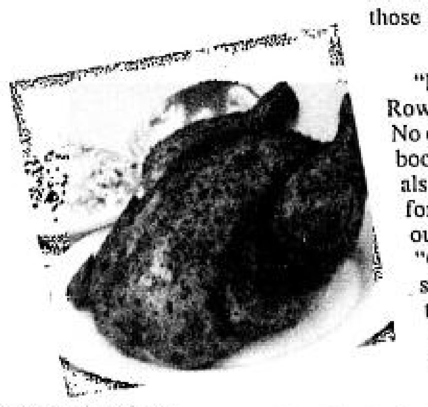
BACKSTREET BOYS. Favorite boy band



TGIF hits the spot.

Literature

"Harry Potter" and his creator J.K. Rowling were big winners this year. No other book came close. The comic book cum magazine Culture Crash also had tons of followers clamoring for more. 2bU! readers can do without seeing more books from the "Chicken Soup" series on their shelves. Pulp and Candy got the thumbs-up. We'll give you one guess on which was voted Worst Magazine for 2000.



2bU! Readers love Kenny Rogers Roasted Chicken.

Food

Tequila Joe's, Friday's and Kenny Rogers all share the No. 1 spot on the Best Restaurant list. Topping the Worst list are Racks and Starbucks.

The 2bU! readers couldn't agree on any specific dish of the year. Among those mentioned were Tequila Joe's Tower of Power, Friday's Mushroom Chicken Mushroom, Don Henrico's Caribbean Green Salad and Tokyo Tokyo's Yakisoba.

McDonald's was still considered the Best Fast Food, while Tropical Hut and Cindy's were given the thumbs-down.

THE GAME is over for Dance Dance Revolution machines.

Sports

Best Athlete of the Year was Martina Hingis while David Bunevacz was voted the Worst. Fans of The Green Archers worked overtime to make DLSU's basketball team the Best UAAP Team of the Year.

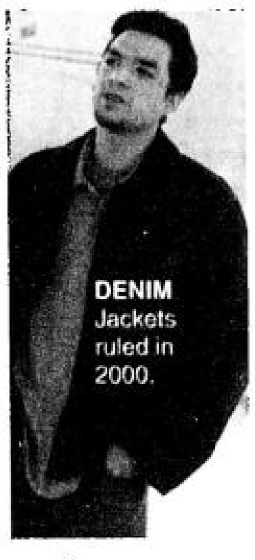
Television

PLDT's "Hello Billy" commercial was voted as the best for the year. Aga's Chickenjoy commercial got votes—for being the most annoying one.

"Dawson's Creek" was voted Best and Worst TV Show of the Year.

Couch potatoes love Katie Holmes and Lisa Kudrow, and hate Antoinette Taus. Joshua Jackson was also voted Best TV Actor of the Year. "Dawson's" charm seems to have worn off. James Van Der Beek headed the list of Worst TV Actors.

Donita was still everyone's favorite VJ. And everyone hates Lily—MTV's virtual VJ. The 2bU! readers were still tuned in to MTV—the year's Best Music Channel.



DENIM Jackets ruled in 2000.

Technology

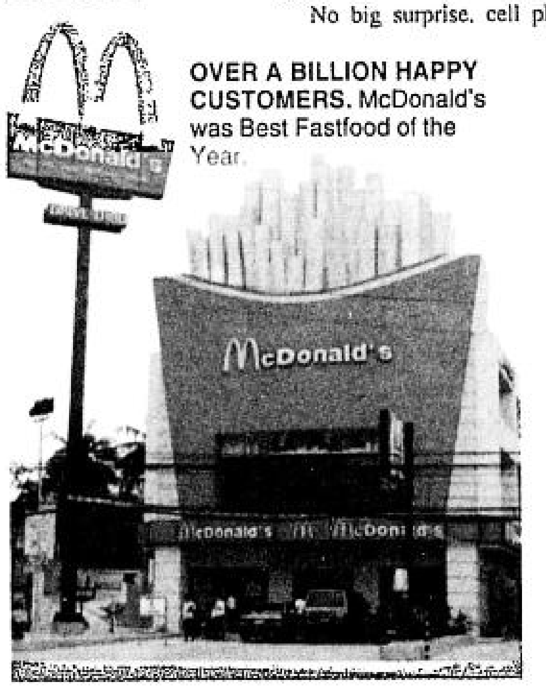
With more and more websites sprouting up every single second of every day, we expected to be swamped with a loooooong list of nominees for the Best Website of the Year. Although www.yourmobile.com, www.inquirer.net and www.femalenetwork.com were high on the list of the Best Wesbites, we realized one thing: A lot of 2bU! readers are also PExers. Pinoy Exchange (www.pinoyexchange.com) was voted Best Website of the Year.

No big surprise, cell phones (particularly Nokia models) were nominated as the year's Best Gadget. Discard those pagers. 2bU! readers branded beepers the Worst Gadget of the Year.

Counterstrike was voted Best Game of the Year while the Dance Dance Revolution machines were given the switch-off.

Pamela Angela Salomon Pastor

THE CORRS

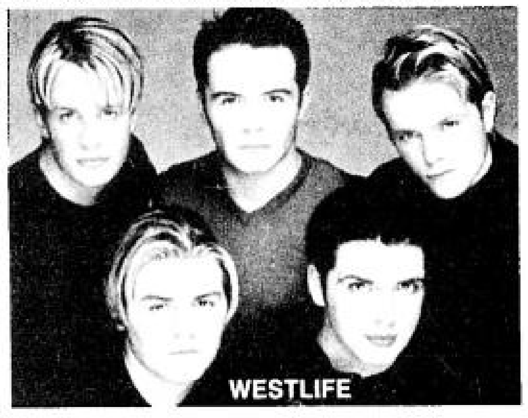


OVER A BILLION HAPPY CUSTOMERS. McDonald's was Best Fastfood of the Year.

BETTER luck next year for The Moffatts.

TOO CROWDED. 2bU! readers can't get their caffeine fix.

2000 was the year for Rivermaya.



WESTLIFE

Stars in the making

BY JULES ALCANTARA
2bU! Correspondent

2001. It's the real start of the millennium, some purists claim. So last year's global celebration was all for naught? You mean to tell me that the three days I spent looking for the perfect outfit for the millennium shebang was an exercise in futility? All the money spent on firecrackers and pyrotechnic display was just really to please the deep-seated pyromaniac tendencies in us? So there's a possibility that theY2K bug might just not be a dud after all? Does this mean all hell will break loose when the clock hits 12:01of Jan 1, 2001?

KRISTINE Hermosa

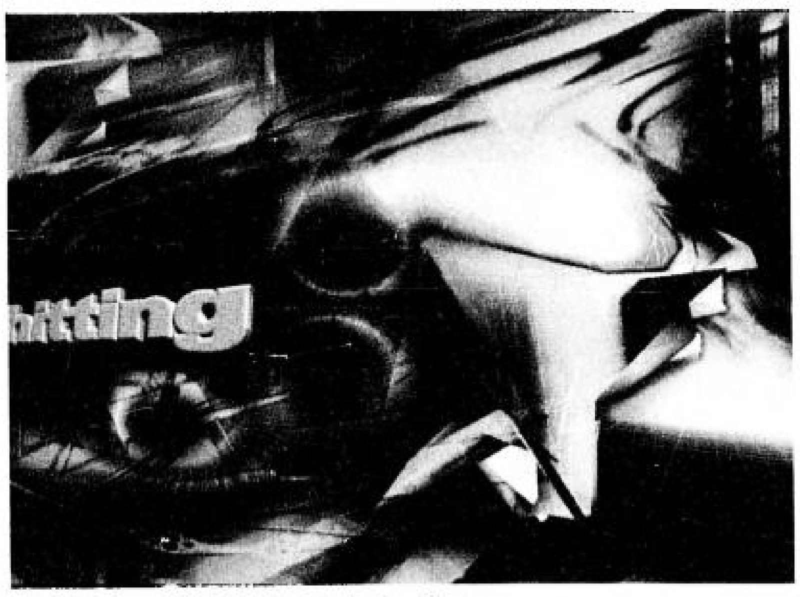
Okay, before I digress some more and continue to rant and rave, here is the newest set of eye candy (and much more) for the "real" millennium. Meanwhile, I'm going to dig up that time capsule I buried somewhere so I can add my "Erap Resign" collectibles.

Kristine Hermosa

actress

What is it with young actresses who started with a soap opera? Despite the preponderance of wannabes and what-have-you in the glittery world of show business, these young and beautiful things from the world of soaps manage to go beyond and stretch their 15 minutes of fame. Haven't we all been enamored and caught up in the hills and valleys of the life and times of Flor de Luna, Mara and Clara, Rosenda, Rosemary and Rosario?

Will Kristine Hermosa, the female lead of "Pangako Sa 'Yo," follow the path of Janice de Belen, Judy Ann Santos and Claudine Barreto? Will the "too-pretty-to-be-a-housemaid" Ina (Hermosa's character in the latest ABS-CBN drama series) create a rabid following among soap drama followers? This we shall see. Meanwhile, please hand over the box of tissue.



ONE of Drew Europeo's many works of art

Drew Europeo

digital artist, web master, Internet biggie

A graduate of the UST College of Architecture and Fine Arts, 24-year-old Drew has been making waves in the Internet scene—both locally and internationally. Her personal website, www.grafikas.com, which showcases her works of art, has been receiving raves from all sorts of people—both techies and Internet junkies. Drew also cofounded www.halfproject.com, a venue for Filipino artists to display their works and expand their imagination and creativity. She, along with a few other Internet aficionados, started Philweavers, a mailing list where website developers can interact. The group has been growing at a tremendous rate. She is also the art director of Adobo.com, last year's Philippine Web Awards' Portal of the Year. A finalist of The Webby Awards for two consecutive years herself and a judge of last year's awards, Drew will continue working out on her passion for color and self-expression. Visit her sites and see the talent and genius behind this woman.

BITUIN Escalante

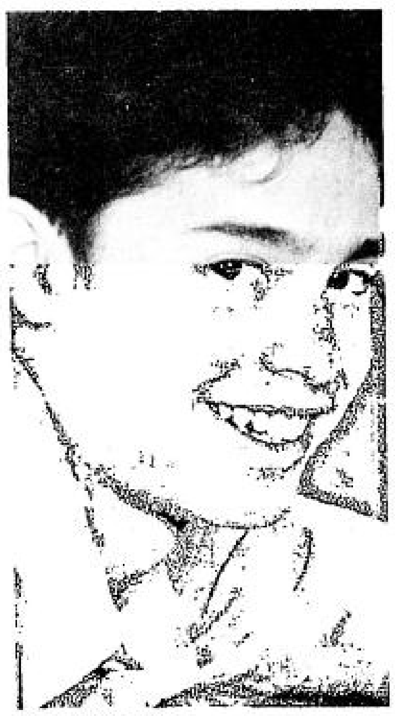
Bituin Escalante

performer and singer extraordinaire

It seems that in this nation of karaoke owners and wannabe singers, a particular skill is a major requirement in order to become a diva or a songbird. No, it's not the attitude nor is it the ability to give life to sappy and sometimes mindless lyrics (although those are definite pluses). You need to have vocal chords made of steel and lungs of industrial strength to be able to hold those notes with fierceness and soul. And oh boy, does Bituin Escalante have that and much more!

Didn't she (with that very prophetic name) take us to new heights of listening glory as she dazzled us in "Rent" and "Jesus Christ Superstar"?

Celestial beings (both real and faux), I am quite sure, will concur.



COGIE Domingo

Cogie Domingo

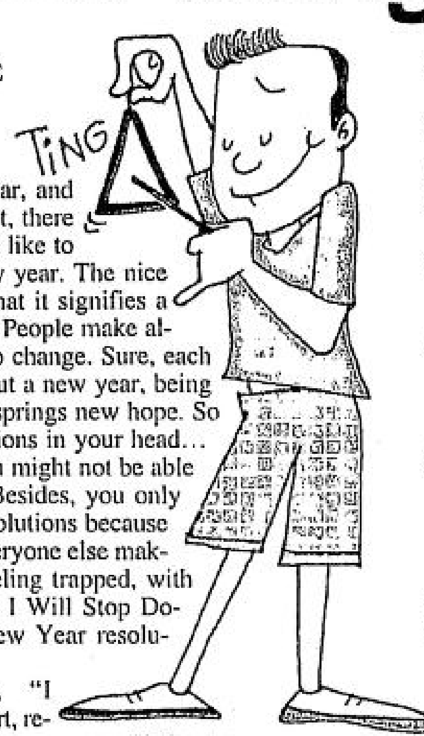
actor

One of the brightest points (and believe me, there are a lot) of Ricky Lee's newest opus, "Deathrow," is Cogie Domingo. Gorgeous, young and definitely talented, this up-and-coming

STARS/ p.C7

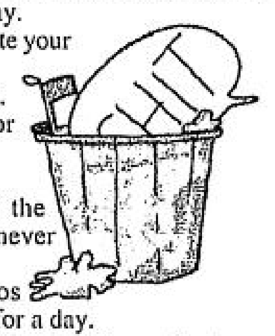
50 new things to do in 2001

By Chiquit Torrente
2bU! Correspondent
UP Diliman



IT'S the end of the year, and however you look at it, there are some things you'd like to be different about the new year. The nice thing about new year is that it signifies a new start, another chance. People make allowances for each other to change. Sure, each day is a new beginning, but a new year, being more symbolic, certainly springs new hope. So you make a list of resolutions in your head… resolutions you realize you might not be able to keep (like that diet!). Besides, you only start thinking up those resolutions because you get caught up with everyone else making them. You end up feeling trapped, with your checklist of "Things I Will Stop Doing…" We say, forget New Year resolutions!

Instead of saying, "I won't…," try this: Set smart, realistic goals that will be fun to pursue and help you discover new things about yourself, your country and your relationships. And to make them even more fun (and easy to reach) try asking a friend to do them with you! Here are 50 new things to do in 2001:



1. Write a story/poem. Or a journal (gotta start somewhere!).
2. Study a foreign language (so you'll be prepped to meet that drool-worthy Italian).
3. Learn to play a musical instrument (it's never too late to start).
4. Pick up a new hobby (e.g., painting, photography).
5. Audition for something (auditions always make a person more confident).
6. Join a contest (you never know when you might win).
7. Read at least 12 good books (one for each month).
8. Watch at least six plays/musicals.
9. Watch a ballet.
10. Visit six art museums.
11. Join a new school org or club.
12. Learn a new software application (and we don't mean games!).
13. Get a summer job.
14. Open a savings account.
15. Get into a fitness program.
16. Get a physical exam.
17. Get your eyes checked.
18. Go to your dentist.
19. Get a facial.
20. Get a new haircut.
21. Get a makeover.
22. Learn a new sport.
23. Drop a bad habit (like smoking or constantly saying "s--t").
24. Start a collection.
25. Clean your room and set aside things you haven't used in the past six months.
26. Have a garage sale or donate your stuff to the Salvation Army.
27. Paint and redecorate your room.
28. Make a scrapbook.
29. Learn to drive or commute.
30. Go to the beach.
31. Go to a part of the country you've never been to.
32. Go to Intramuros and walk around for a day.
33. Go to the Planetarium or Science Centrum.
34. Go on a road trip.
35. Go to the zoo and pet some animals.
36. Visit an orphanage.
37. Join a mission outreach program.
38. Volunteer to help build a house with Habitat for Humanity.
39. Plant a tree.
40. Join a retreat.
41. Join your church youth group (or start your own support group).
42. Join a rally.
43. Call up old friends and organize a reunion.
44. Learn your family history by taking grandma out for tea.
45. Send greeting cards to your relatives abroad (it's always nice to get snail mail!).
46. Visit your old school.
47. Find a playground and swing as high as you dare.
48. Have a water-balloon fight with your friends.
49. Chaperone your little siblings/cousins to an amusement park.
50. Thank God every night before you go to sleep!

E-mail the author at chiquit@edsamail.com.ph

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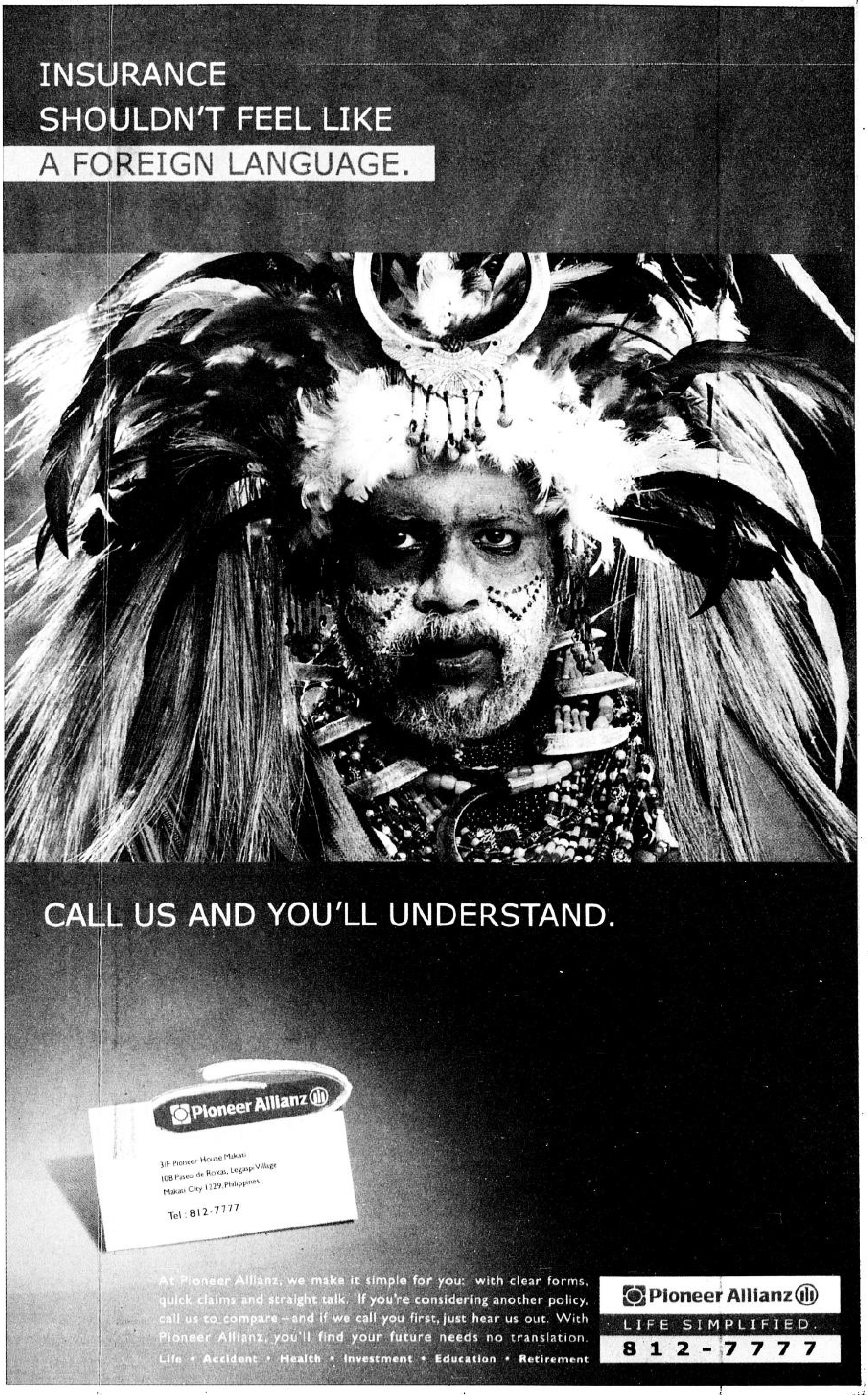

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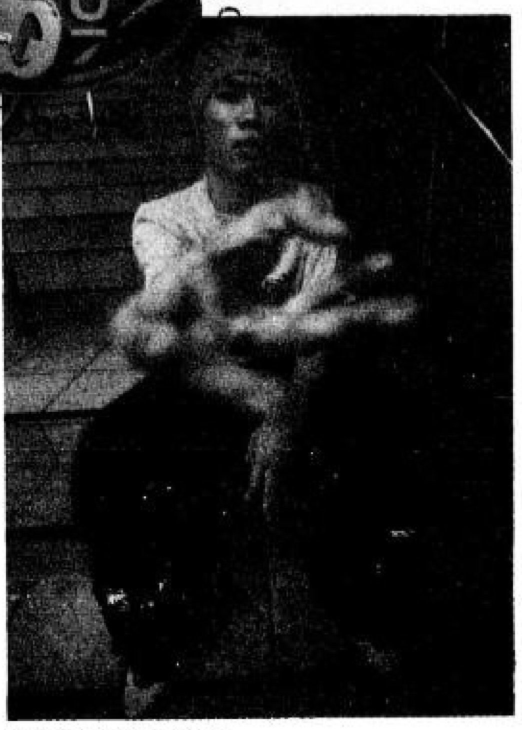
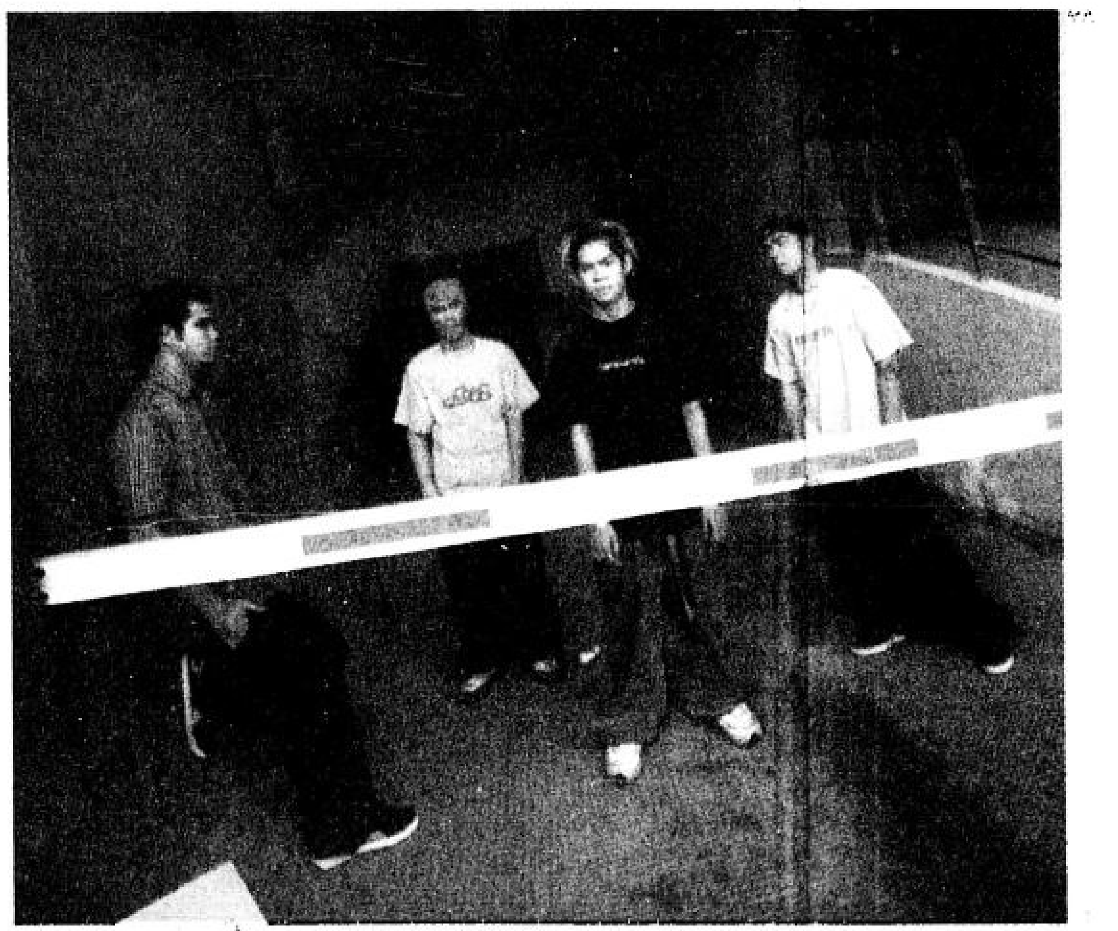


CHRISTIAN Atienza



PHOTOS BY JOAN BONDOC

The GLITCH that stole the scene

Look south, young man. The Cebu band Glitch gives Manila bands a run for their money

BY MAUI V. REYES
2bu! Correspondent

THE WEATHER was playing tricks again. Five minutes ago there was a strong gust of wind, as if it was about to rain, and now the sun was up. Outside the OctoArts EMI building, the four guys of the Cebu band Glitch were being set apart for a photo shoot. Vocalist Ryan "Cyanide" Sison had come up with the concept for the pictorial after seeing his reflection in a stairwell.

"Let's do a fish lens kind of picture," he told his bassist, Simon "Boobop" Nuñez. Simon turned to me and suggested the fish lens concept. I pointed to the photographer and told Simon to let her know their concept. Simon scratched his head, let out a "Damn," and dropped the idea. Ryan, on the other hand, was persistent and summoned the courage to suggest it to the photographer.

Not since Sheila and the Insects introduced their music to Manila have redneck Metro listeners pay attention to the Cebu music scene. Sure, bands often travel to the south to play concerts, and okay, there's an NU rock station there, too. But the region that consists of mostly show bands and cover groups is starting to cough up more talent, one of them being the rap-metal group, Glitch.

Composed of Sison, Nuñez, Christian Atienza (guitars), RJ Galgo (guitars), John Mendoza (drums) and Abe Rostaph (DJ), Glitch is one of the latest bands to emerge from the hardcore-rap-metal pool of Pinoy artists. What sets them apart? Only fans can tell. Their debut album, "Illementz," contains more synthesized experiments and vocal range than any other work. Stand-outs would be the Deftones-like track, "Flower," and the carrier single, "Shiver." Having Jamir Garcia of Slapshock produce the song "Illement" wasn't a bad touch, either. Renmin Nadela of Agaw-Agimat produced the album.

Ryan didn't get his way with the fish lens thing, and Simon ended up having his picture taken between two posts. Still shy, not sure of what to do, the band headed up the building for the interview. Because it's still a band that answers one-liners to questions and looks to each other for support, it's safe to say this band has a long way to go.

How did the band get together?

Ryan: We all knew each other in school, and we skateboard a lot together. So it was just something like, "how about we form a band?"

So you've been skateboarding since...?

Simon: (That was) early 1995. We formed the band late '96. Ryan wanted to start this white-rap group, like white-rap style you know?

R: And both of us like to rap, we write lots of stuff. And we like the Deftones...

S: Rage Against the Machine...

R: We mix those stuff with hip-hip music, and put in those heavy guitar riffs and screams.

Have you always played your instruments?

S: Well I used to play guitars. But, uh, there are lots of guitar players here.

R: Uh, I don't know any instrument.

Christian: I've been playing guitars since I was in first year high school.

John: Drums, since first year high school.

So who came up with the name Glitch?

R: By the time we formed that group we all had problems with our families, you know, like, "Hey why don't you go study, forget about music, forget about skateboarding." We're the glitch family. Our brothers are like, first-honor students in school...

S: We're like the black sheep.

What were your former jobs before?

R: I worked at a fast-food chain for a month. I was kicked out...I didn't work for about five days. *(laughs)*

C: I was just a student.

Student? So what were you like back in school?

R: A lot of people hated us, we were different.

S: We got these big pants...

R: Yeah they'd go, "Oh hey look, there's a hip-hop, go club him!" Back in Cebu there's like, the metal heads, and the hip-hip heads, but then they don't go together.

What's it like, being from Cebu and trying to make it big here?

S: It's hard.

R: People expect a lot from us, and we just hope we can (meet) those expectations.

S: We don't even have a house here!

R: We don't even have a manager.

SIMON Nuñez

RYAN Galgo

Let's move on to the music—what was it like recording the album?

R: It was tight!

S: We were nobody's.

R: We didn't know what to do, or how to do things.

What about the writing and recording process?

R: When you have nothing to do, you just write. I write lyrics based on my experiences. And then you got your riffs, the guitar riffs, and you just insert those.

Who writes songs?

R: All of us.

Do you write the melody first or the lyrics?

R: Sometimes the melody, sometimes the lyrics.

Do you ever fight?

R: A lot!

S: Over small things, like, who goes first to play PlayStation, who gets to shower first.

R: And food. It's like, when someone asks for food we're all selfish about it.

So you're into videogames?

R: Tekken. I don't go for RPG's (role-playing games)... it's boring, man. You can't stop and can't get out. We like Counterstrike. There's a new Counterstrike where it's for real. You use pellet guns.

Isn't that like paintball?

R: No, Paintball's too expensive.

Back to the music. You sound a *lot* like those other bands out there—Slapshock, Greyhoundz, Cheese... So what sets you apart?

R: You can't really avoid it, since our influences are probably all the same. We both look up to the same bands, you know.

S: And, um, we're from Cebu. *(laughs)* I think it's okay, because look, you have your blues-rock and roll thing, like, Wolfgang, Razorback, they got their own thing. And we have our own thing.

What's it like playing live?!

S: It's like an exercise for us. It's tedious, but fun.

R: It's like, when people go wild, that's really fun, you can make them do stuff.

Any rituals before going onstage?

All: We pray.

R: And we don't smoke before we play.

Okay what's in your CD Player right now?

C: Dilated Peoples.

R: Portishead.

C: Massive Attack. Hip-hop.

S: Deftones, Sepultura.

R: Go back to the old school, like Pearl Jam.

S: Weezer.

R: Radiohead.

Ten years from now, where do you see yourself?

S: *(points out the window)* Um, out...in the States? We want to tour there.

R: Dead or something.

So if you could have it your way, you could control your future. What's going to happen from now to 10 years?

R: You mean we can control it?

S: All right! We'd be rich!

R: Go sell worldwide.

Speaking of worldwide, what do you think about the free MP3 file sharing thing?

R: I'm not into the whole "music is free" thing. The artists exert a lot of effort to bring that music, and it's not fair that people can have it for free. Nothing's for free.

How about Pinoy rock?

R: It's gonna grow. Not just because rap-metal's a big thing, it doesn't mean it's going to stop there.

S: Be worldwide!

R: No, man, it'll be like: different kids of music fusing into one. More cross-overs.

Glitch's album, "Illementz," is now out under OctoArts EMI.

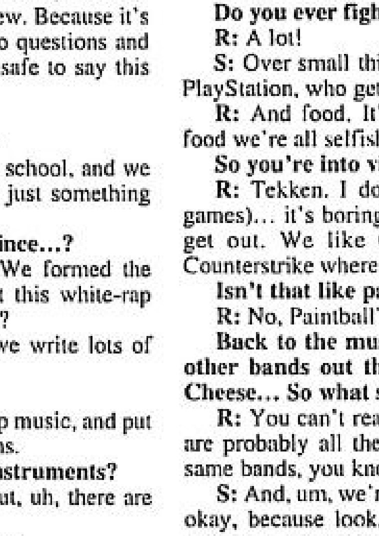
Stars in the making

(From page C4)

actor is a welcome change from all the song-and-dance, mindless, witless, talent-deprived young things that comprise the celluloid world. There is indeed hope yet.

William Antonio

professional basketball player, Pop Cola Panthers



WILLIAM Antonio.

Watching a basketball game is a visual experience. Your eyes have to be quick as you observe the players and find that person who will stick out amongst the limbs and legs that paint the board. And it takes a whole lot to be able to stand out in the world of professional basketball. It takes extraordinary talent, physical excellence, and perseverance to score points in the world of steals, rebounds and field goals.

In the PBA, there is a veritable dearth of athletes who possess all these qualities. But Will Antonio, one of PBA's rising stars, makes the game look so interesting. All of a sudden, a welcome fringe benefit is derived from watching the game. Basketball has never looked so good, pun intended. If you don't get the intentional pun, then go watch him make his moves for his team, Pop Cola Panthers. Just don't let anyone hear you growl with pleasure.

Ed Feist

VJ, MYX

Thank Studio 23 for giving us MYX. Thank MYX for giving us Edward "Ed" Feist. This Joshua Jackson dead ringer is a rather different VJ compared to the others. Not too perky, not too corny and not to mention, not too theatrical. Like MYX, no gimmicks, just pure music.

Derek Ramsey, Christian Vasquez and Pia Rivera

models

Watch out for these three in 2001. Whether in the print ads, TV commercials or on the ramp, these three will surely make your hormones rave and rage.

KC Concepcion

daughter of megastar Sharon Cuneta and one of Manila's most beautiful faces

Everyone has seen the Megastar's teenage daughter. Let's just hope that in the year 2001, we will get more than just a glimpse. If we are to gauge her future by the basis of the level of anticipation and excitement that her imminent debut has already incited, then KC Concepcion may just surpass her mother's popularity.

5 THINGS TO START THE YEAR RIGHT

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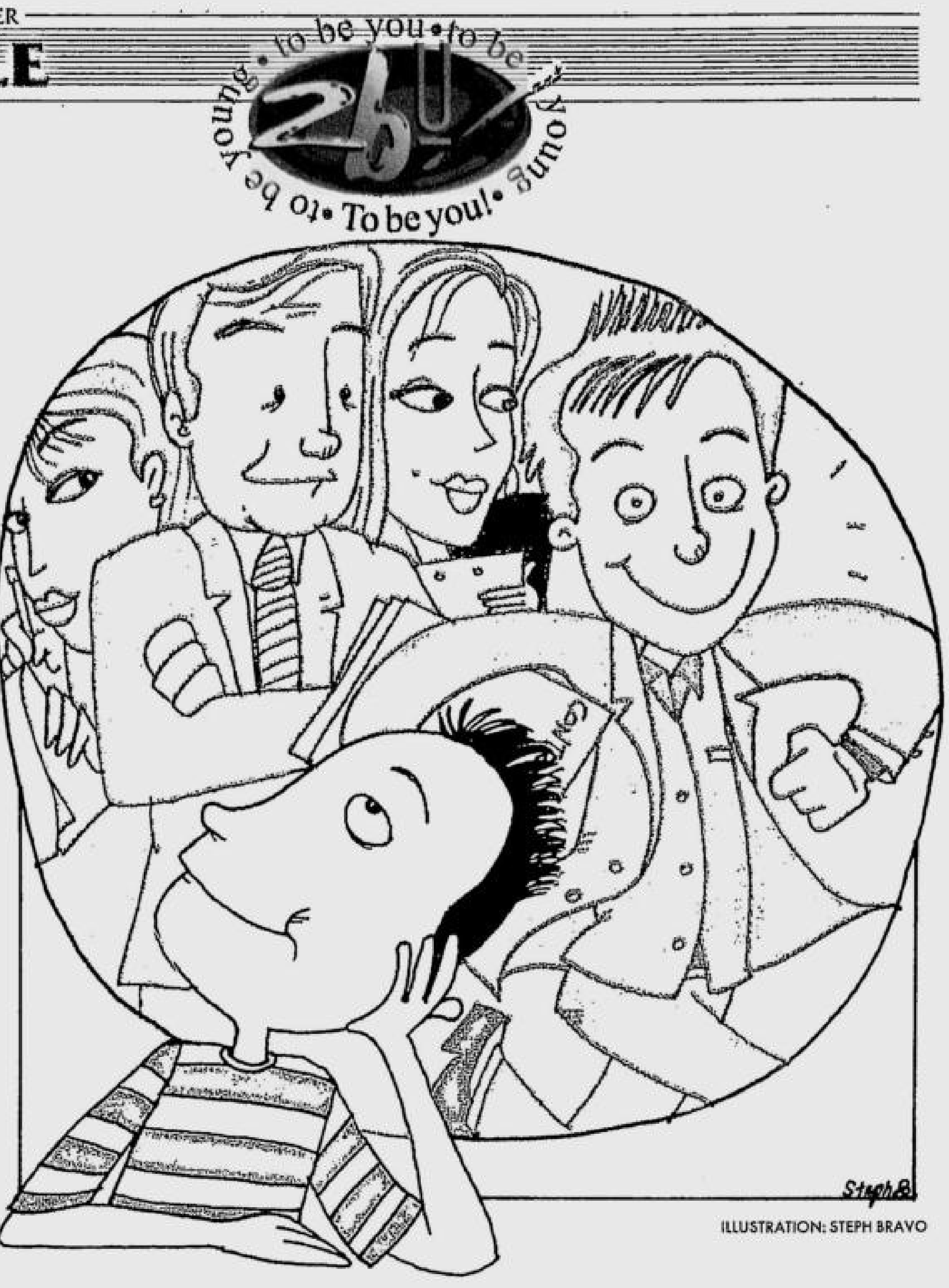
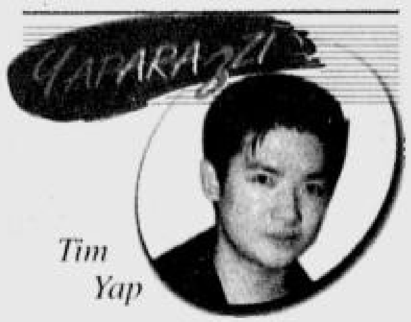

to be young • to be you • to be young • To be you!
2b U
Steph B.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Time for change

My power is my age
I'm getting it together to break out of my cage
Flaming youth will set the world on fire
Flaming youth's flag is flowing higher.
—**Kiss**



Tim Yap

THE CHANGING of the guard is happening now. Never before has the youth been given this much power.

I remember the first time I produced an event. I was 18 at that time, still in college, about to sign a major contract with , the presenter for the show. I looked *totoy* with my slightly spiky hair and preppy clothes, wide-eyed with excitement with the deal that was to push through.

To prepare for that momentous signing event, I tried my best to "look old." I didn't want the vice president of the company to think he was dealing with a kid. I borrowed my friend's Armani glasses, wore my prom night's double-breasted jacket and slipped into my favorite Cole Haan loafers (the one that had two leather oh-so-'80s tassels sticking out). I looked like my dad!

That day we had an accounting exam and I was taking longer than usual to finish the balance sheets. Looking at my watch, I realized I was about to be late. Sweating profusely, I rushed and finished the test and ran out of class and into my car. My pager kept on ringing—I was already late.

"Sorry. I had to finish my exams, er, other meetings!" I blurted out as I stormed into the restaurant where the contract-signing was to take place. The tall man who was the top executive of the corporate giant that was to sponsor the event was with his two secretaries. They looked at me with that "How old are you?" look they would give a freshman intern applicant.

And when they did ask that question, I quickly answered, "Age is a state of mind," rather defensively, yet trying hard to be philosophical. In the end, after a few kinks, the deal pushed through. The event became a success.

My point in this story is that sometimes us, young people, have a tendency to be shy about our age, thinking we're too young, too inexperienced, too naïve—not realizing that it is to our advantage. Being young nowadays means having the power to change, the energy to move, that creativity that spells **"fresh."**

We do not belong to the demographic "small ones" anymore. Youth markets are now the official targets of big businesses, spawned by our not-to-be-ignored newfound power—buying or otherwise.

Just look around. From newspapers, TV and radio to stores selling jeans, eyewear and other trendy staff, to bars, clubs and restaurants, the young, hip urban guerrilla has never been so in demand.

Notice, too, the trend toward younger and younger entrepreneurs creating their own jobs with their own resources (Zagu, Orbitz, et al) to artists who are redefining their craft, the youth of today refuse to become cogs in the machine. The balance is already shifting.

Luis Sequeira, a Canadian youth chronicler, writes, "Realize the power of being the focus of all those corporate giants and harness it. Take into consideration the speed at which the world is moving and know that in a very short tune that focus will move and the power as well."

The wheel is definitely moving. Let us take our places. It is, indeed, our turn.

Ready, get set. Go.

> Command the world and it will be yours. Youth is power

Q&A #5

Can you earn points from all participating establishments?

You can earn points in participating shops, department stores, cinemas and supermarkets (except jewelry, home appliance and service shops) even if no discounts were given.

Discount Plus
Anna Bengson
TOTAL

DISCOUNT PLUS HOTLINE 752-73 124 to 25

"My hair has always been naturally lush and thick. But all of a sudden, I was losing a LOT of hair. I found hair strands on my pillow, in my bathtub, on my towel---everywhere! As a result, my hair appeared thinning and limp. I was panicking because I felt threatened by total hair loss! Then my friend recommended that I should go to Svenson if I wanted to restore my hair's fullness.

"It took just a few treatments plus the Laser Hair Cell Accelerator to make a significant change in the texture of my hair. It started to have the body and volume that I lost before. I don't have excessive falling hair anymore and even the itchiness on my scalp has been reduced.

"I've always thought that if Svenson couldn't help me with my hair-loss problem then nothing else can. Now that my hair has gone from limp to lush, I'm glad I did go to Svenson to end all my hair-loss worries!"

Eva Abesamis

"My Hair-loss Worries are Finally Over, Thanks to Svenson!"

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Checking your skin tone and undertone

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

I AM mestiza with light brown hair that was golden blonde when I was born. Can I wear contact lenses with colors aside from hazel without looking trying hard? My dad is German and my mom is half-Filipina and half-Irish.

HELENA

It would depend on your skin tone. It is not sufficient to be white; you also have to check out the undertones. Get a piece of very white cloth, go under natural light and compare it to the skin on your belly or the insides of your wrist. Is it yellow in comparison or pinkish? If it is pinkish, you can wear whatever color you want, like blue, violet or gray. If it is yellowish, the only other safe color is green aside from hazel. An example of pink-white skin is Rosanna Roces and an example of yellow-toned white is Sunshine Cruz. They are both exceedingly fair but the undertones differ.

* * *

I HAVE gross blackheads in my ear and people point it out to me all the time. How do I treat this? It's hard to pick them off because of the curves in the ear.

LUIS

You have to cleanse, tone and treat it like your face, which I guess is also prone to blackheads but is easier to rid of because of the flatter surface.

I would advice a liquid acne cleanser like Clean & Clear, Neutrogena Acne Wash or Ionax scrub. BHA is designed specifically to exfoliate oily skin and keep its pores free from dead skin that clog up the area causing acne such as blackheads.

Follow with a cotton swab soaked in a toner with exfoliating properties as well. A cotton swab is better than a cotton ball because it is better equipped to cover all the nooks and cranny of the ear. When ears are finally oil-free and clean, apply acne medication containing ingredients such as benzyl peroxide or salicylic acid or even AHA to exfoliate the ear further, drying up the blackheads and eventually leading them to flake off while preventing new ones from cropping up. Suggested medicines are: PanOxyl Gel .5 percent. Isotretinoin, Retin A, Neutrogena Clear Pore.

* * *

CAN you suggest a pressed powder that has a higher SPF than 15? I can't seem to find any higher than SPF 10 anywhere. While you're at it, I hope you can give me advice regarding a flawless foundation finish. Aside from cleansing toning and moisturizing, I now use an SPF 15 facial sunblock underneath my foundation. The problem is, my makeup starts streaking or clumping. Is there a step here I can eliminate without giving up a skin care benefit?

SONIA

The highest SPF in a face powder, I discovered, is Neutrogena Healthy Defense Pressed Powder with SPF 30, which I order from relatives in the United States.

As for the flawless finish, you put too much on your face. Why not get a moisturizer with SPF? The facial sunblock you use could even take the place of your moisturizer. I even skip moisturizer because my face is oily and go straight to applying a liquid foundation with SPF 20.

For those who moisturize, wait 10-15 minutes till your skin absorbs the moisturizer before applying foundation. This will allow the makeup to go smoothly because there is no longer a greasy surface where the powders will clump up.

Tip: Using an SPF 15 sunblock plus an SPF 20 foundation and SPF 30 powder won't give you a total of SPF 65. Only the highest protection will work so you only get SPF 30.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

For any questions or products you want to road-test, write to MakeOver 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805

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Amoxicillin Capsule 250 mg	3.75	Glibenclamide Tablet 5 mg	2.00
Amoxicillin Capsule 500 mg	6.00	INH - Syrup 100 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	45.00
Amoxicillin Suspension 125 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	45.00	Isoniazid Tablet 300 mg	1.50
Ampicillin Capsule 500 mg	7.25	Loperamide HCl Capsule 2 mg	2.75
Ampicillin Powder for Injection 500 mg, vial	35.00	Mefenamic Acid Capsule 250 mg	2.50
Bromhexine HCl Syrup 4 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	45.00	Mefenamic Acid Tablet 500 mg	3.00
Bromhexine HCl Tablet 8 mg	1.75	Multi-Vitamin Syrup 60 mL	56.00
Carbocisteine (SCMC) Capsule 500 mg	4.50	Multi-Vitamin Tablet	3.00
Carbocisteine Syrup (SCMC) 100 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	49.00	Paracetamol Syrup 125 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	36.50
Cephalexin Capsule 500 mg	11.00	Paracetamol Tablet 500 mg	0.90
Chloramphenicol Suspension 125 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	63.00	Rifampicin Suspension 100 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	75.00
Combi Pack - INH-Rifam-PZA 300/450/500 mg	27.00/day	Rifampicin Capsule 450 mg	15.00
Combi Pack - INH-Rifam 300/450 mg	18.00/day	Salbutamol Syrup 2 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	42.00
Co-trimoxazole Suspension (TM-40 mg, SMZ-200 mg), 60 mL	56.00	Salbutamol Tablet 2 mg	1.75
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